METRO / A23
Controversial audio expert Jonathan Tiongco killed in car accident

ACROSS / A18
PDI correspondent says he's being harassed by a mayor in Davao del Sur

NEWS / A2
Ex-DepEd official tags Pichay as leader of CA extortion ring

ENTERTAINMENT / D1
Husband of Amalia Fuentes seen dating woman from prominent Cebu clan

Judge cites commanders criminally liable for slays

By Allison W. Lopez

THE DOCTRINE OF COMMAND RESPONSIBILI-

Judge Orlino Pangilo Jr. of Branch 870, Bicutan [illegible] was still "out" in November last that the policeman were [illegible]

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIE

Wednesday, June 27, 2007 44 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 199 P18

ON THE VERGE OF CONVERSION? Pope Benedict XVI (seat with) Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair on Tuesday making reports he's looking to the Catholic faith. Britain has never had a Catholic PM. AFP, A1

'CLOSET' CATHOLIC

Blair called 'the great convert' in Rome

BRITAIN'S PRIME MINISTER Tony Blair met Saturday with Pope Benedict XVI in spite of an audience at the Vatican, heightening speculation that the outgoing premier was on the verge of converting to Catholicism.

"There he is," whispered a beaming Belgian official. "The great convert," the British paper The Observer reported Sunday.

Britain's dominant religion is the Church of England, whose followers are called Anglicans. Britain has never had a Catholic prime minister.

"When contacted by the Inquirer, the British Embassy would not comment on Blair's reported conversion.

Blair heads over today the prime minister's post in Finance Minister Gordon Brown after 10 years in office.

He is visible in Pope Benedict's first study, was the gift that the Pontiff had just received from Blair—a framed containing three original photographs of Cardinal John Henry Newman, the most famous English convert to Roman Catholicism, before it died.

Newman, an Anglican priest, converted to 1845 and was later made a cardinal of the Catholic Church. In 1991 he was declared "venerable," putting him on the road to canonized.

Blair had been attending Catholic Mass, often with his family but this occasionally alone, since long before he became prime minister. His wife, Cherie, is a Catholic.

Opposition lawyers quit

CENTER OF CONTROVERSY The deeply disputed celebration of the municipal COCs from 22 towns by the special board of canvassers is going on at the 5-ha compound of the Maguindanao capitol with a flyover in Shariff Aguak.

But Comelec continues Maguindanao's special canvass despite walkout

By Nikko Dizon

SHARIFF AGUAK, MAGUINDANAO—Lawyers of the Genuine Opposition (GO) yesterday quit the scandal-ridden Maguindanao vote canvassing and Bayan Muna's chief legal counsel staged a walkout, charging the proceedings were meant to "legitimize" fraudulent vote tallies.

A special board of canvassers is establishing the tallies—at municipal certificates of canvass (COCs)—from 22 towns to determine who between the administration's Team Unity (TU) candidates Zaira Kilgad Sahid and GO's appellee "Sokol" Mamalo Ali would take the 12th Senatorial slot in the midterm elections.

As of yesterday partial results of the tabulations of tallies from five towns showed Zaldon with 56,868 votes and Mamalo 10 with 23,406.

In Manila, the Supreme Court yesterday held back from issuing a temporary restraining order to stop the controversial Maguindanao vote count until it had heard from the Commission on Elections and Zaldy.

At a media conference to said the tribunal hoped the Comelec would not do anything in the meantime to preempt the court's decision.

The court scheduled oral arguments for 2 p.m. on Thursday on President's pe-

Bedol roams freely despite Comelec's arrest order

By Jocelyn R. Ala in Manila and Nikko Dizon in Maguindanao

HOPING TO SHAKE HIS "CRIMINAL LIKE" arrested on," the Commission on Elections yesterday ordered the arrest of its embattled poll supervisor Lintang Bedol for his supposed refusal to explain how Maguindanao vote tallies in his custody went stolen.

The arrest order marked the latest twist in a bizarre election saga that has kept Malacañang in suspenseful weeks over who will be the 12th and last Senate slot, drawn some school teachers into fielding and apparently led to the murder of a school official.

Commissioner Resurreccion Borra announced the arrest order after the Comelec en banc fielded in contempt for his failure to appear and explain in writing the circumstances behind the supposed theft of the municipal certificates of canvass (COCs) for Maguindanao.

Calling the poll supervisor "a fugitive," Borra warned Bedol, who purportedly refused to give him his address, to "turn himself very well" if he meant leniency.

He also called on the people to effect a citizen's arrest and turn Bedol over to the police.

Borra's remarks seemed curious. Bedol

Wife sues Iggy over depletion of ₱127M in assets

By Margaux C. Diola and Kristine L. Alave

THE ESTRANGED WIFE OF MEDIA

Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo has filed a petition for support and the dissolution of their conjugal property, accusing him of depleting their assets of close to ₱127 million "in a spree of only one year."

Arroyo left Singapore on a chartered Philippine Airlines flight and was whisked to on his late Tuesday in Equatorial Guinea's capital Malabo for a 12-hour visit. He arrives in Manila on Wednesday.

Ms Arroyo arrived in Singapore on Saturday to attend the World Economic Forum on East Asia and made her second stay—still in the city-

While in Equatorial Guinea, Ms Arroyo is scheduled to address the People's Republic

BITTERSWEET: Wife of Rep. Iggy Arroyo (inset, left), Rizal, marks first anniversary of their separation.

Mike A at 61: '20 pounds lighter, 10 years younger'

"WALKING MIRACLE." Mike Arroyo (in white) says he can [illegible] because of his medical scholarship.

Teachers risk lives in classrooms without borders

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S "mobile teachers," or MTs, are not your typical public schoolteachers.

They travel long distances, at times trekking for hours just to reach their target students—out-of-school youth and adults, a majority of whom can neither read nor write.

In the absence of classrooms, many MTs hold special literacy classes under the shade of trees, among other outdoor sites.

Some of them have been mistaken for military agents, if not rebel supporters, putting their lives and those of their loved ones in danger.

Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus points to a call Baguio's 694 mobile teachers the "brave behind our Alternative Learning System" or ALS.

GMA to seal oil exploration venture in E. Guinea

FOLLOWING THE HOST BY BEHIND AND seven ministers to explore newly discovered oil resources in West Africa, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday flew to Equatorial Guinea in the hope of sealing a joint venture exploration deal with the oil-rich nation.

Ms. Arroyo left Singapore on a chartered Philippine Airlines flight and was whisked to on his late Tuesday in Equatorial Guinea's capital Malabo for a 12-hour visit. She arrives in Manila on Wednesday.

Ms Arroyo arrived in Singapore on Saturday to attend the World Economic Forum on East Asia and made her second stay—still in the city-

While in Equatorial Guinea, Ms Arroyo is scheduled to address the People's Republic Chamber, followed by a meeting with her counterpart, President Teodoro Obiang Mbasogo.

The two leaders are scheduled to witness the signing of an accord for further bilateral cooperation.

A Palace statement said Manila's friendship with Malabo grew after the state visit to the Philippines of President Mbasogo in May 2006.

"We shall engage Equatorial Guinea [where oil] and multilaterally through the mutual support of each other's initiatives in the international community. Our countries have a shared agenda of defeating poverty through the New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership and the United Nations," the statement quoted Ms Arroyo as saying.

A3 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2007

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WEATHER FORECAST

Senate calls for probe of broadband contract

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE YESTERDAY CALLED FOR AN investigation of the $329-million broadband contract entered into by the Department of Transportation and Communications with an allegedly notorious Chinese company that had left a long trail of dubious deals around the world.

"I conducted research on the Chinese telecommunications company, ZTE Corp., that bagged the National Broadband Network. I discovered that it was involved in questionable deals in other countries where it set up businesses," Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a statement.

Pimentel claimed that ZTE had been accused of bribing public officials to secure juicy projects and falsifying its bid documents to make it appear that it was China's biggest telecoms player (it is actually ranked No. 32). Financial and economic woes that ZTE became embroiled in dubious deals included Mexico, Liberia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Libya and Burma.

Pimentel questioned the DOTC for failing to do a background check on ZTE before signing the contract on April 20 during President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to China.

Questions on ZTE's background and the questionable disappearance of the original copy of the contract have given the government another black eye.

"The controversy will not die down until corrective steps are made, the Senate must look into the transaction," said Pimentel.

The National Bureau of Investigation yesterday stepped into the controversy.

An NBI official suspects that the loss of the documents could possibly be a result of a conspiracy among the country's commercial interest in China, his assistance and competitors of ZTE.

Amel Dalmacion, chief of the NBI Special Task Force, said they were looking into the possibility that threatened Nitto Wee Ang, commercial attaché of the Philippine Consulate in Guangzhou, Guangdong, and Allan Lin, a Chinese national who is said to be close to Zhuo Qiang, and who works as a trade assistant and interpreter, connived with rival companies of ZTE Corp.

"We're still establishing information, but it's possible that the competitors [of ZTE] were behind the loss of the documents," Dalmacion told reporters. "It could be a dismissed employee because they did not win the bid."

Dalmacion said that Lin had denied involvement or knowledge of the missing documents, saying he was not aware that the Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) signed by ZTE vice president Yu Hong and Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza were in his custody.

The NBI-STF filed on Monday charges against Ang for violation of Article 227 (Undervaluation of public funds and property) of the Office of the Ombudsman.

Ang and Lin were the last persons to possession of the five copies of the signed MOAs which were missing a few hours after the signing. *With a report from Tina G. Santos*

'2 ex-DepEd chiefs hit for cash, favors by CA members'

By Akiatis Papa

A FORMER EDUCATION official has revealed details of the alleged extortion racket in the Commission on Appointments involving the confirmation of two former education secretaries.

But the way the official, who asked not to be named, told it, the racket more often than not involved "home-making," not always in money terms but in the form of favors, projects and lucrative future work as members from the Department of Education (DepEd).

The DepEd has the biggest budget of all government agencies.

Outgoing Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras had claimed that the original panel confirmation process was corrupted by senators involving some members of the CA. He said a cabal he called the "Big 5" extorted up to P6 million from government officials seeking confirmation of their appointments from the body.

The former education official said that since four successions during the multi-senator hearings for then Education Secretaries Florencio Abad and Jesli Lapus (he is not the DepEd one asked his money in exchange for spending top for projects.

He said in 2004, the Senate committee in the CA invited Abad and other education officials to a meeting at a restaurant in Quezon City.

He said the congressmen's group was led by Sorsogon Rep. Prospero Pichay who arrived at the group's unofficial spokesperson.

He quoted Pichay as saying that P5 million would have to be made available for each congressman.

He said Abad agreed but said the amount would not be in cash but in the form of school buildings, or computer laboratories and furniture. Abad also insisted the amount be spread out over two years "so the budget of the DepEd would be affected."

'Everybody needs it'

Abad, who is himself a former member of Congress, later told the DepEd officials that he agreed to the deal so "everybody needs it. [DepEd funds] anyway." Abad got his confirmation.

"The question is, was the amount ever change for confirmation or a palatable [assurance]. Me get the impression that that was how the game was played. I would not have been surprised if, had he [Abad] not agreed to the deal, he would not have been confirmed," the source said.

Earlier in 2002, during the confirmation of De Jesus, the source said two congressmen approached the assessors and said he needed to "make available" a certain amount. The two congressmen also wanted 30 percent of all DepEd textbook contracts.

"Sa Dir. Jesus and that is [congress], he would not make these deals," the source said. Besides which, the textbook contracts had already been coordinated and the funds delivered.

The official said the two congressmen "made sure" Dr. Jesus was not confirmed. Not only that, the source said the two congressmen made sure the DepEd was funded before the House committee on good government on the issue of the textbook contracts.

"Clearly, it was a quid pro quo. The worst part was that the two were Lakas group," the official said.

When Dr. Jesus tried to raise the issue with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Malacañang officials, he was told "Subalit ka sa confirmation mo" (you are on your own). Dr. Jesus was never confirmed.

Abad told the Inquirer it was the "usual" practice for congressmen to ask for documents from officials seeking confirmation.

"I don't know if you can call it a bribe but [it's] usual for actions to take advantage of the CA and budget hearings to ask for projects, appointments or documents of local councilors/city councils," Abad said in a text message.

Pichay denial

Contacted for comment, Pichay yesterday denied that he or any member of the CA had asked Abad for anything.

"That is not true. In fact, it was he [Abad] who requested the meeting," Pichay told the Inquirer.

Pichay recalled that Abad "insisted we be confirmed immediately. We said 'OK, let just wait.'"

During the meeting, Pichay said Abad gave them a list of projects for every district.

"There is nothing wrong with that. We told him to implement these projects immediately. But we never asked for anything," Pichay said.

He also pointed out that the issue was taking on political color as Abad was a member of the Hitch and Move movement, which had sought the ouster of the President.

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Gov Vi asked to step into Taal spa controversy

By Nob Custodio

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PDI reporter did not post bail, court records show

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FORMER PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER provincial correspondent Jobelle Tesorio did not post bail, contrary to earlier reports, and that was why she was detained for 10 hours last week, court records showed.

Tesorio, facing libel charges filed by a Pulilan congressman four years ago, could have avoided detention in De Quezon City Reginal Trial Court Branch 83 under Judge Maria Teresa Yuhai showed that on Dec. 13, the judge issued an arrest warrant for Tesorio, who had failed to appear in the hearing scheduled that day, and recalled her P10,000 bond. The bond was also cancelled.

Tesorio, who now works for Asia News Network in Thailand, filed a motion for reconsideration of the order, explaining that she was unable to attend the hearing because she was in Hong Kong for a series of lectures. She attached her plane tickets, which indicated the date of her departure: from the country on Dec. 9 and her return on Dec. 18.

She told the court, through her lawyer, that she attempted to catch a plane back to the country in time for the hearing but all flights were fully booked.

The judge denied the motion for lack of merit on Jan. 29 because the plane tickets itself indicated that the accused had no intention of returning to the country for the Dec. 12 hearing.

During the June 21 hearing, it was learned that Tesorio did not post the P200,000 bail.

"She could have posted bail at any time between Jan. 29 and June 21 but she did not. It is part of court procedure to order the commitment of a person who had not yet posted bail," a staff member of Branch 83, who requested anonymity, explained.

Technically, Tesorio had had not yet been posted when the judge issued the commitment order, she added.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND THE INSURANCE COMMISSION

In the last few weeks, the state of the insurance industry has been the subject of news releases and pronouncements. We, the various associations of insurance intermediaries (brokers and agents), are one with the insurance companies in voicing our concern over increasing regulations that potentially impact our operations, and ultimately increase the cost of insurance protection to the public.

Those recent regulations include:

1. Re-imposition of minimum premium rates for Earthquake, Typhoon and Flood risks – In a global environment of borderless trade, the regulation of premium rates is almost an archaic throwback to the last century. These legislated prices result in a doubling of premium expenses for many policyholders, and do not reflect the actual level of insurance premium rates available from the international reinsurance markets, which are the fundamental determinant of the real cost of insurance. By allowing free and competitive economic forces, rather than government, to dictate premium rates, the insuring public is better served.

2. Requirement for insurance companies to obtain guarantee payment bonds from brokers and agents – For the premiums of insurance companies to qualify as admitted assets, they now have to secure surety bonds from their producing agents and brokers. These surety bonds involve a significant operating expense, as well as the encumbrance of cash collateral as security, and therefore pose a barrier particularly to the small- and mid-scale insurance agents and brokers who, despite their size, serve a segment of the insuring public who cannot otherwise access the larger agents and brokers.

3. Increase in Fees and Charges – Fees and charges for supervision, licensing and filing of annual statements have been excessively raised. For instance, license renewal fees for general agents have gone up by 1,000%, while license renewal fees for insurance brokers have gone up by 830%. License fees for new entrants have increased at twice these rates. In addition, an entirely new schedule of charges for supervision and for the submission of financial statements has been created. An arbitrary and material rise in fees inevitably increases the cost of doing business, and discourages the industry's growth and expansion that would have provided more choices of intermediaries to consumers.

We do not dispute that the government supervising agencies of any industry are empowered to issue directives to regulate the conduct of business, for as long as these are within the purview of applicable law and the Constitution. We are of the view, however, that prior consultation with the real participants and the principal channels through which insurance products are distributed – the insurance agents and insurance brokers – as well as an honest recognition of their views and positions, even if contrary to those of the regulator, are absolutely imperative for constructive industry reforms to succeed.

We are firm in our resolve to cooperate with the Insurance Commission in an atmosphere of dialogue and a free exchange of ideas.

Valentin C. Valledor
President
Association of Insurance Brokers of the Philippines

Augusto L. Tobias, II
President
Financial Insurance Intermediaries Association

Antonio B. Cabezas
President
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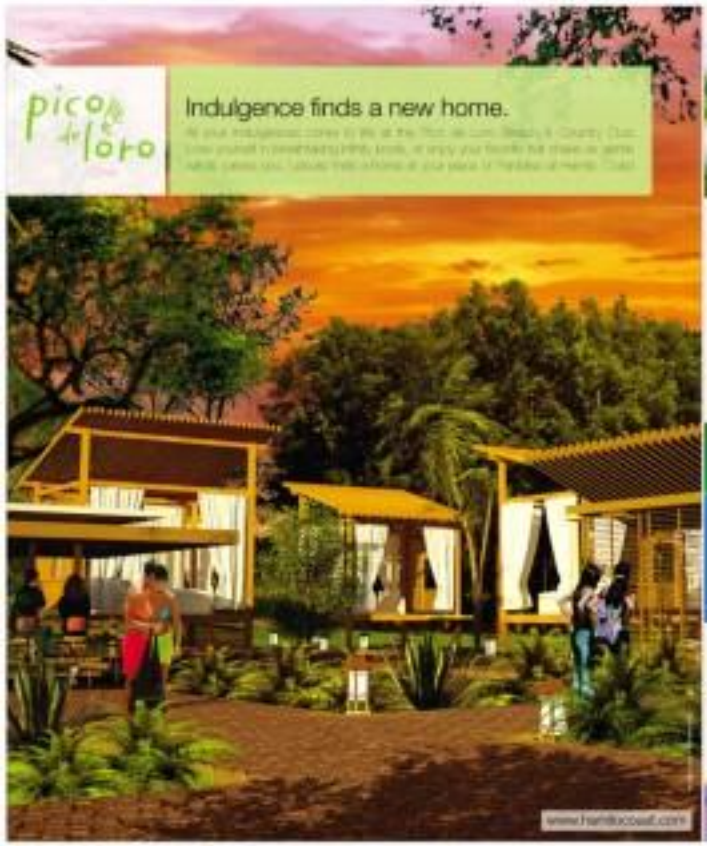

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Free them, moms of 2 missing UP coeds appeal to military

By Maryanne C. Ortiz

ALONG WITH THE POLITICAL killings, the forced disappearances have brought much grief.

In front of Bulatao Cochanan spoke with reporters yesterday, exactly a year after her two-year-old daughter Sherlyn was abducted in Bulacan with her friend Karen Empeño, to air an appeal to the military to release her child.

Erlinda said that prior to her abduction, Sherlyn and her husband had worked as community organizers for the farmers group Alyansang Magbubukid ng Bulacan.

She said that on April 11, Sherlyn suddenly showed up at her mother-in-law's house in Calumpit, Bulacan, and then decided to go to Quezon City.

Erlinda was escorted by three women and a man, who accompanied her supposedly to get some of her clothes. Erlinda said in a press conference at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

She said Sherlyn was quiet despite her mother-in-law's questions on her whereabouts the past year and the identities of her companions.

A YEAR OF LIVING IN AGONY: The mothers of missing UP students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño call on the military to release their daughters during a press conference to mark the first anniversary of their forced disappearance. JOAN BONDOC

Embrace

"Sherlyn just embraced her husband's mother and left a few minutes past 9 p.m.," Erlinda said, then added with a piercing wail.

"But mother-in-law was hesitant that she was able to embrace my daughter."

Erlinda said Jose is military or-

der (naval Sherlyn's mother-in-law the following day asking about "suspected communists" who came to the house the previous night.

"What are doing there but to intimidate Sherlyn's loved ones," she said.

Erlinda said Sherlyn "looked thin and pale," and was without her baby. "I hope and pray that the military would not use her for

by us a parent to get her husband," she said.

"I believe that Sherlyn was made to go to her mother-in-law's house, on the military's orders, to lure her husband," she added.

Erlinda also said that militants, the men with members of the group Bayan-caroler and Kampanya, and representatives of the Commission on Human Rights to conduct search warrant.

"But the soldiers just told us that they could not tell us anything," she said.

She expressed disappointment with the Court of Appeals' decision to dismiss the habeas corpus petition, saying in thanking them he could do so.

Spondents were "not telling the whole truth as they appeared evasive in their declarations."

Alive or dead

Karen's mother, Concia Empeño, who equally emotional during the press conference, appealing to the military to produce her 23-year-old daughter "alive or dead."

"I just want to be sure that Dr. Hadu Cadapan was "fortunate because she knows her daughter was still be alive."

Both Sherlyn and Karen were UP students at the time of their abduction.

Judge cites commanders criminally liable . . .

Front page 1

ing to use in order to hold commanders and police officers "criminally liable" for their subordinates' actions.

The judge cut on one of the 99 special tribunals designated by the Supreme Court to handle extrajudicial killings.

Propeda said the summit on extrajudicial killings proposed by Chief Justice Reynato Puno would step up the judiciary's efforts.

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the summit was scheduled for July 16-17.

"In attended here, a commander cannot be held liable if he is not a principal, an accomplice or an accessory. But [under] the principle of command responsibility, he can be held responsible if he has information to believe, failed to prevent or played blind to prejudicial killings and enforced disappearances committed by his subordinates," Propeda said.

He said the President, as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, was also covered by the principle but would be liable "only after he or she objectionable from office."

Propeda said the Melo Commission had recommended in its report the use of the command responsibility doctrine, which is defined thus:

"Responsibility for command shortcomings or dereliction in duty lies with the person or persons who actually perpetrate these acts. Anyone with higher authority who authorized, tolerated, or ignored these acts may be liable for them."

The Melo Commission was formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to look into the killings of leftist activists and journalists, which have drawn an outpour concern from the international community.

Palparan

Palparan (in retired) handling a case involving the killing of Eddie boy "Chay" Napoles Jr., a member of the Alyansa ng Pagkakaisa ng Kabataan ng Maguindanao (Alyansa ng Kabataan Bh).

Napoles was shot dead on May 20, 2002. His companion, Reil "Bong" Lavalente, survived the attack.

Landicho later named the retiradiste as Lucy Vera Agundo and Arturo Flores alias "Oliver" both at large, the two were identified as members of the group that met under duty Col. Jovito Palparan and 56 Sgt. Raul Hilario.

In a statement, Landicho said he heard the voice of a man saying, "Tadtad mong patay na yan Mokoy mare-rebelde ka pala."

He said he overheard Agundo say "OK na, patay na yan [They're dead]," and Flores responsed, "OK, matatahimik na siguro si Colonel Palparan [Palparan will be pleased]," before fleeing.

Napoles' lawyer retired[illegible] Mercado were dropped as respondents by three Department of Justice prosecutors on Aug. 28, 2002.

In their resolution, state prosecutors Aurelio Trampe, Emmanuel Velasco Abad and Sebastian Cuevas said there was "no probable cause" to indict Palparan and Mercado because of "absence of direct and independent evidence of their participation in the conspiracy between [Agundo and Flores]."

"In currently pointed out, Colonel Palparan's name has been in no commanding officer of the Philippine Army, 204th Infantry Brigade police station commander in order in the area, and in doing so, it is not farfetched that his name may be dragged into controversies if only by analogy and discredit in his person," the prosecutors said.

Judge Penaflo said the charges against Palparan and Hilario were dropped because there was "no showing of command responsibility in the case."

He said in order to enforce orderly observing command responsibility in the military would make officers subordinates solely liable for neglect of duty.

EO 226

Section 1 of EO 226 stated that, (T. 1995, states that "any [AFP] officer shall be held accountable for neglect of duty under this doctrine, if his command responsibility, if he has knowledge that a crime or offense shall be committed, is being committed, or has been committed by his subordinates, or by others within his area of responsibility and, despite such knowledge, he did not take positive action to prevent or punish the subordinates or to report the commission."

Said Penaflo: "It should be stressed that a commander is duty-bound to—from the moment, supervise his subordinates and control the overall activities of his subordinates within his area of operations, and can and shall be held administratively accountable for neglect of duty in taking appropriate action to investigate his men."

Penaflo, a lawyer at the University of the East Law school, said that because there was actually "no law which concretizes that the commander may be held criminally liable," the command responsibility doctrine may be used.

He noted that activist Lawyers led by Barry Roque had also used the command responsibility doctrine in the case filed before the Commission on Human Rights to seek the declaration of human rights violations by Retired Gen. Jovito Palparan and 56 Sgt. Raul Hilario.

He said Roque cited Article 86 of the UN document that holds the commanders of the units responsible if the crimes and killings were declared by international tribunals as "international wrongful acts."

Supreme Court summit

He said the summit—to be attended by judges from the special courts, military and police officials, human rights advocates, activists, and members of the Bible Commission and the police's Task Force Usig—would serve as a venue to come up with concrete steps to put a stop to the killings.

"The killings have to be stopped because the rule of law is being disrespected," the judge said in Filipino.

He added that the killings were "blasphemous to the courts," and that justice should be served by the courts, and not "the vigilante, must vote citizens."

In Tagbilaran City, Rep. Teresita Quintos-Deles of the Palawan party-list group Bayan Muna welcomed the summit proposed by Chief Justice Puno. (This) indicates the Supreme Court's determination to put an end to extrajudicial killings and other human rights violations," he said.

Review of rules

Quintos said a review of the rules of procedure to improve the chances of the victims' relatives to find justice by also making it harder for the perpetrators to escape responsibility was but proper and "a challenge to the judicial system."

Quintos was in Bohol yesterday to attend with authorities looking into the killing of Dr. Jesus Bello Jr., the head of Bayan Muna in Davao City.

Bello, 50, was shot in the head and left dead on 11:30 p.m. on June 21 at the public market in Bien Unido town. He died two days later at the Cebuano Talibon Memorial Hospital.

Police investigators linked as one Rhezin Bello, relative at large.

With a report from Ric Rapalpe, Inquirer Visayas

Masaganang tubig para sa Parañaque

Tuloy-tuloy ang paglalatag ng mga bagong tubo upang mapalakas ang tubig at maserbisyuhan ang mga hindi pa kunektado sa Maynilad dito sa Parañaque.

Simula Hulyo hanggang Oktubre 2007, maglalatag ang Maynilad ng malaking tubo mula Kabihasnan hanggang Evacom, Sucat.

Humihingi kami ng paumanhin sa abalang dulot ng proyekto sa mga motorista at pedestriyan.

Ang proyektong ito ay sa pagtutulungan ni Mayor Jun Bernabe at Maynilad para sa tuloy-tuloy na pag-unlad ng Parañaque!

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICE, INC.
Todo-Bakas ang Serbisyo sa Pilipinos!

Corrections

IN THE JUNE 23 ISSUE, a story on Page A2—"Put up or shut up, DFA dares Estrada"—misstated that Lido B. Villafuerte represents congressional district in Aklan. Villafuerte represents the second district of Camarines Sur.

IN THE JUNE 24 ISSUE, the editorial on Page A12 of the Opinion section—"Unjust media lynch"—misstated that former Inquirer correspondent Joselito Tesoro was still detained at Camp Katipunan in Quezon City. After posting bail, Tesoro was released in the evening of June 22.

IN THE JUNE 25 ISSUE, a front page article—"Armed action feed two-evening feud in Pasolo Province"—misstated the name of the second man killed in the incident in the activity reported. Jesus of Bonon who participated in the vote-planting were in question of the Cabinet Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Awards...not the 13th Artist Award.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, June 27, 2007
Girls Week (in Ordinary Time
Lord of Misericordes

1st Reading: Gen 15:1-12, 17-18
Gospel: Matthew 7:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inside they are wild wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Do you ever gather grapes from thistles, or figs from thistles?

"A good tree always produces good fruit; a rotten tree produces bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit and a rotten tree cannot bear good fruit. Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. So you will recognize them by their fruit."

Commentary

God blesses Abram but Abram is impatient for a child—he suspects God's promises of descendants in terms of a literal one. God tells him to look at the stars that they will be those who shall come after him to fulfill. Abram has many questions about what he will have and he makes God to make a covenant with Abram who is anxious, confirming and promising to be a descendant, a covenant of God that is presented and witnessed to example by sacrifices. These are our visits.

Jesus tells us that we must be known by our deeds. We are no longer known by our blood ties, baptism, religion, membership in certain offices, but by what we do and say and who we align ourselves with in God's kingdom. We are not a tree by its fruits—what have we been producing and offering to others? Jesus can't tell your true face, only another's?

Pag-IBIG lowers loan rates

THE HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND, popularly known as the Pag-IBIG Fund, has further lowered the interest rate on housing loans between P500,000 and P750,000 to seven percent. Vice President Fidel Ramos and Cayetano Paredes, chairman of the Pag-IBIG Fund, announced the new rate.

The last time Pag-IBIG cut interest rates on its housing loans was in November 2006.

Dr. Cielito Habito, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, said the rate reduction was meant to make housing more affordable and accessible to ordinary workers.

He said the latest cut in interest could help couples of members in the middle-income bracket or those earning P16,000 to P20,000 per month.

He said this group constituted 25 percent of the labor force based on the statistics of the National Statistical Coordination Board.

"This is the most logical step to take. Its members [has to November 2006, we already addressed the affordability issue of the lower income brackets, or 75 percent of the workforce, when we reduced the rate from nine percent to seven percent for amounts for a P500,000 housing loan," Dr. Cayetano said.

In several persons, the monthly amortization, including principal and interest, is now down to P4,990 from P6,860 previously for housing loans of P500,000 to P750,000.

Dr. Cayetano stressed, however, that carrying out "no-brainer to goodness interest reduction scheme" should also be complemented by streamlined loan requirements.

He directed Pag-IBIG Fund officials to look into the requirements of banks to see how the requirements could be more responsive in this area.

Cynthia D. Johnson

TO OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS

In compliance with the Bureau of Food and Drug's directive, Wyeth is recalling formula which may have been exposed to moisture from May 23, 2006 to July 26, 2006. The recall results from rust and/or mold being found on some containers in the lots listed herein.

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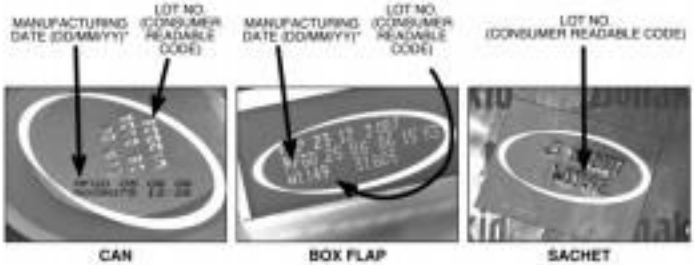
Sincerely,

P. M. de Claro
President & General Manager
Wyeth Philippines, Inc.



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* Please note the manufacturing date shown on the containers is DD/MM/YY. The lots listed on the opposite page show the date as MM/DD/YY.

WYETH FORMULA LOTS INCLUDED IN THE BFAD RECALL ORDER

BONAKID™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W1116	06-1116	05/16/06
W1126	06-1126	05/21/06
W1129	06-1129	05/22/06
W1130	06-1130	05/23/06
W1131	06-1131	05/23/06
W1132	06-1132	05/24/06
W1133	06-1133	05/24/06
W1134	06-1134	05/25/06
W1135	06-1135	05/26/06
W1136	06-1136	05/26/06
W1139	06-1139	06/21/06
W1141	06-1141	06/22/06
W1142	06-1142	06/22/06
W1143	06-1143	06/23/06
W1144	06-1144	06/23/06
W1146A	06-1146	06/24/06
W1147	06-1147	06/24/06
W1148	06-1148	06/24/06
W1149	06-1149	06/25/06
W1150	06-1150	06/25/06
W1151	06-1151	06/26/06
W1155	06-1155	06/27/06
W1158	06-1158	06/28/06
W1159	06-1159	06/29/06
W1160	06-1160	06/30/06
W1162	06-1162	06/30/06
W1163	06-1163	07/22/06
W1164	06-1164	07/22/06
W1166	06-1166	07/22/06
W1167	06-1167	07/23/06
W1168	06-1168	07/23/06
W1169	06-1169	07/23/06
W1170A	06-1170	07/24/06
W1171	06-1171	07/23/06
W1172	06-1172	07/24/06
W1173	06-1173	07/24/06
W1174	06-1174	07/24/06
W1175	06-1175	07/24/06
W1176	06-1176	07/25/06
W1177	06-1177	07/25/06
W1178	06-1178	07/26/06
W1179	06-1179	07/26/06
W1180	06-1180	07/26/06

BONAMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
50060854	50060854	10/19/05
50060855	50060855	10/20/05
50060856	50060856	10/21/05
50060857	50060857	10/24/05
W0055	06-0055	04/25/06
W0065	06-0065	05/01/06
W0078	06-0078	05/22/06
W0081	06-0081	05/23/06
W0082	06-0082	05/24/06
W0083	06-0083	05/25/06
W0084	06-0084	05/25/06
W0085	06-0085	05/25/06
W0102	06-0102	06/16/06
W0104	06-0104	06/17/06
W0105	06-0105	06/17/06
W0106	06-0106	06/19/06
W0107	06-0107	06/19/06
W0108	06-0108	06/20/06
W0109	06-0109	06/21/06

BONAMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W0110	06-0110	06/21/06
W0110I	06-0110	06/22/06
W0111	06-0111	06/22/06
W0111A	06-0111	06/22/06
W0112	06-0112	06/22/06
W0113	06-0113	06/23/06
W0114	06-0114	06/23/06
W0115	06-0115	06/24/06
W0116	06-0116	06/25/06
W0117	06-0117	06/25/06
W0118	06-0118	06/25/06
W0120	06-0120	07/14/06
W0121	06-0121	07/15/06
W0122	06-0122	07/15/06
W0123	06-0123	07/15/06
W0124	06-0124	07/16/06
W0125	06-0125	07/16/06
W0126	06-0126	07/17/06
W0127	06-0127	07/17/06
W0128	06-0128	07/18/06
W0131	06-0131	07/19/06
W0133	06-0133	07/21/06
W0134	06-0134	07/21/06

BONNA™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W4133	06-4133	06/07/06
W4135	06-4135	06/08/06
W4138	06-4138	06/08/06
W4140	06-4140	06/11/06
W4143	06-4143	06/12/06
W4145	06-4145	06/13/06
W4151	06-4151	06/27/06
W4156	06-4156	06/25/06
W4160	06-4160	07/01/06
W4161	06-4161	07/01/06
W4162	06-4162	07/02/06
W4166	06-4166	07/05/06
W4167	06-4167	07/04/06
W4169	06-4169	07/05/06
W4170	06-4170	07/05/06
W4171	06-4171	07/06/06
W4172A	06-4172	07/07/06
W4174	06-4174	07/06/06
W4176	06-4176	07/10/06
W4177	06-4177	07/10/06
W4178	06-4178	07/11/06
W4179	06-4179	07/11/06
W4180	06-4180	07/12/06
W4181	06-4181	07/12/06
W4182	06-4182	07/13/06
W4183	06-4183	07/13/06

PROGRESS™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W12013	06-12013	06/09/06
W12014	06-12014	06/10/06
W12015	06-12015	06/10/06
W12016	06-12016	06/10/06
W12017	06-12017	06/11/06
W12018	06-12018	06/11/06
W12019	06-12019	06/11/06
W12020	06-12020	06/12/06

PROGRESS™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W12021	06-12021	06/13/06
W12022	06-12022	07/16/06
W12023	06-12023	07/17/06
W12024	06-12024	07/17/06
W12026	06-12026	07/18/06
W12027	06-12027	07/19/06
W12028	06-12028	07/19/06
W12029	06-12029	07/19/06
W12030	06-12030	07/19/06
W12032	06-12032	07/21/06

PROMIL™

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W8020	06-8020	07/25/06
W8021	06-8021	07/25/06
W8023	06-8023	07/25/06

PROMIL™ GOLD

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W2012	06-2012	07/12/06
W2013	06-2013	07/13/06
W2014	06-2014	07/14/06
W2015	06-2015	07/14/06
W2016	06-2016	07/14/06
W2017	06-2017	07/14/06
W2018	06-2018	07/14/06
W2021	06-2021	07/16/06
W2022	06-2022	07/18/06
W2025	06-2025	07/31/06

PROMIL™ KID

Lot No. (Consumer Readable Code)	Parent Lot No. (MO No.)	Manufacturing Date (MM/DD/YY)
W13034	06-13034	03/08/06
W13087	06-13087	06/14/06
W13088	06-13088	06/14/06
W13089	06-13089	06/15/06
W13090	06-13090	06/15/06
W13090A	06-13090	06/16/06
W13091	06-13091	06/16/06
W13092	06-13092	06/16/06
W13093	06-13093	06/16/06
W13094	06-13094	06/17/06
W13095	06-13095	06/17/06
W13096	06-13096	06/18/06
W13097	06-13097	06/18/06
W13099	06-13099	07/01/06
W13102	06-13102	07/02/06
W13105	06-13105	07/04/06
W13107A	06-13107	07/05/06
W13108	06-13108	07/05/06
W13109	06-13109	07/05/06
W13110	06-13110	07/06/06
W13111	06-13111	07/06/06
W13112	06-13112	07/06/06
W13113	06-13113	07/07/06
W13114	06-13114	07/07/06
W13115	06-13115	07/08/06
W13116	06-13116	07/08/06
W13117	06-13117	07/09/06
W13119	06-13119	07/10/06
W13120	06-13120	07/11/06
W13121	06-13121	07/13/06

Opposition lawyers quit but canvass continues

From page A1

stress to stop the canvassing and embolden the votes from Miguda Arroyo in the Senate tabulation.

"These proceedings are loaded. They are meant to legitimize the Bedol CoC, maybe because my lover ang mga kano [about the Americans]," Colmenares said in Filipino to Rosmari Nerd Gutierrez-Bautista, Bayan Muna lawyer, told the Inquirer after he walked out of the presidential capitol's session hall where the canvassing was being held.

Colmenares was referring to Macapagal-Arroyo's controversial election supervisor Lintang Bedol, who claimed he had lost to remove the first copies of the Maguindanao CoCs.

Colmenares abandoned the proceedings hours after 203 armed men in camouflage and Lelle de Lima left for Manila, saying they had to attend to other election cases.

But De Lima left with a parting shot.

She pointed out to the special provincial board of canvassers that Bedol's election in the votes received by Senator-elect Aquilino Villarosa III in tallies from Cotabato—because of the discrepancies.

De Lima said there could be "additional evidence that the municipal CoC was considered tainted."

The board spent much of their discussions yesterday on the party-list issue and would tabulate only the numerical tallies from three local congressional Congressional districts, even though the board tabulated results from only three towns the other day.

Colmenares walked out after the board, led by Comelec lawyer Emilio Santos, denied Bayan Muna's objection to the consolidation of votes in 16 municipalities where the total votes cast for party-list groups overshot the total number of registered voters.

Santos explains

Colmenares said that seeing those votes was illegitimate, where counting of votes only took place in 19 of its 37 precincts, according to a report of school district supervisor Miriam Chinambing.

Broadsiding votes have granted down to Lando Del Norte.

Colmenares assured the board to defer the canvassing—as what it did to the Sharif Aguak CoC on Monday—because of the discrepancies.

But Santos told the Inquirer that the board's only mandate was to canvass Maguindanao's municipal CoCs as long as they appeared regular on their face.

"We cannot go beyond that," Santos said.

Santos said that all objections regarding vote discrepancies could be raised before the National Board of Canvassers subcommittee for party-lists.

Santos said the special canvassing would only be conducted to avoid any legitimate over, without representatives from the opposition and the party-list so they had been duly notified of the proceedings.

According to the Comelec's last official tabulation in Manila, Pimentel is leading Bedol by more than 111,000 votes, without counting Maguindanao.

Lawyers from both camps agree that Zubiri would jump to 12th place if the Maguindanao votes are tabulated. In an unofficial Maguindanao tally shown by lawyers to reporters, Zubiri has 393,823 votes and Pimentel 67,857.

Maguindanao became a center of controversy after several school teachers in the town of Magindanao told media and poll watching groups that armed men had seized their ballot boxes and filled out the ballots with the names of 30 candidates, to ensure a 12-0 administration win in the province.

If Zubiri wins ...

If Zubiri wins because of Maguindanao, Colmenares said "it would affect the credibility of the election."

He said counsel George Garcia said nothing could change the mind of the opposition that the Maguindanao votes were rigged.

"When the canvassing began, that was already in their minds. You can't change that anymore. They're thinking has always been the result is false, a fiasco. What can we do?" Garcia said.

Garcia said that after period of the 22 CoCs, he was convinced that those were genuine and no shows documents.

Moreover, the ballot the vote tallies, Garcia said he saw that several towns gave more votes to 10 candidates than to 12 candidates.

In its resolution, the Supreme Court directed the Comelec and Zubiri, if he desires, to file their comments on Pimentel's petition by noon on Thursday.

The high court said it would only be his turn to get the ruling of the Comelec and Zubiri before issuing any final order. It also said that the Court, before it considers the propriety of issuing a TRO, accords the Comelec an opportunity to be heard by way of a written comment," it said in a June 26 resolution.

Don't preempt court ruling

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said the high court was basing on the poll body not to do anything that would make the court's action moot, when asked if the issue could be rendered moot should the Comelec finished the canvassing of Maguindanao votes before Thursday.

"We are hoping that with the order of the court, they will act accordingly and will not do anything to preempt the decision of the high court," Marquez told reporters.

"The fact that the case is being set for oral argument would be enough for the Comelec to act accordingly."

In a 33-page petition, notified opposition Sen. Teodilo Lacson asked the Comelec to dissolve the special provincial board of canvassers (SPBOC) for Maguindanao on grounds it was illegally created.

Lacson also asked the Comelec to act to restrain anymore the results from the Maguindanao, nullify the board's proceedings and quickly proclaim the last winning senator.

Lacson said the Comelec en banc, acting as the National Board of Canvassers, did not have the authority to form the SPBOC, that its creation was not needed and that the Commission committed grave abuse of discretion when it turned over the several copies of the municipal tallies it gathered from Maguindanao to the SPBOC for tabulation. With reports from Iola B. Salinas-Arcilla and Jerome Aning

Bedol roams freely despite Comelec's arrest order

From page A1

appeared to be roaming freely around the Maguindanao capital of Sharif Aguak, giving interviews to the Inquirer on Monday night and the following day and also going to his office in the provincial capitol, knowing he arrested at his office at 9 a.m.

The CoCs, or vote tallies, would ostensibly support the contention of the administration's Team Unity (TU) ticket that its senatorial candidates had scored a 12-0 sweep in Maguindanao.

In Sharif Aguak, Bedol appeared unfazed by the arrest order.

"Sige, doo ahead). That means they have plans in file a case against me. I can post bail," he told the Inquirer.

"Maybe I can ask for pre-[pre-(P)] detention from friends," added Bedol, who said he would go to Zamboanga for a medical checkup.

The controversial Maguindanao election supervisor said he feared a murder case against him.

"Maybe I can ask for pre-[pre-(P)] detention from friends," added Bedol, who said he would go to Zamboanga for a medical checkup.

The controversial Maguindanao election supervisor said he feared a murder case against him.

Comelec officials said they had other plans for dealing with Bedol.

"We would like to surprise him," Torres said. "Let us see what he will do. I think he will start cringing like a cornered rat."

Blitzkrieg moves

The seemingly blitzkrieg moves against Bedol came a day after he challenged his detractors, in an interview with the Inquirer, to put him in court, saying he was ready to face his accusers.

Torres, head of Task Force Maguindanao that looked into allegations of vote fraud in the province, said Bedol was arrested "planning something" that would cost Bedol's "bravery."

Bedol had told the Inquirer he wanted more than 20 guns for his protection and had a gun arrested in his hotel during the interview.

Bedol said he had the weapons for his protection and had a gun arrested in his hotel during the interview.

Torres said Bedol had committed cases of carnage, Torres stressed.

Asked by Bedol's "bragging" about his small personal armory, which could cite over two guns, if there is a great threat to his life, he can own a maximum of 10 guns.

Exemptions to the 10-gun rule, Garcia said, are members of gun clubs. But he said that any guns in excess of 10 "should be kept in a safe" of the gun club.

It was not known if Bedol was a member of a gun club.

Bedol in trouble over private arsenal

By Ricardo Papa

PEERS IT RAINS, IT DRIZZLE poses the Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

The controversial poll official could find himself in deeper trouble after he claimed in news more than 20 guns in an interview with the Inquirer just days after.

The Philippine National Police Firearms and Explosives Division (PEU) confirmed yesterday that only two guns were licensed to Bedol—two shotguns and one long firearm.

Because of this, PEU director Chief Supt. Florencio Cacoon said Bedol should be held liable for illegal possession of firearms.

According to Cacoon, an individual can own two guns. If there is a great threat to his life, he can own a maximum of 10 guns.

Exemptions to the 10-gun rule, Cacoon said, are members of gun clubs. But he said that any guns in excess of 10 "should be kept in a safe" of the gun club.

It was not known if Bedol was a member of a gun club.

Challenge accepted

Torres said the poll body told Bedol in contempt for repeatedly defying its orders.

"We have been giving him all the chances to defend himself. Unfortunately, he prefers to challenge the Comelec and we accept his challenge," an incensed Torres told reporters.

Acting on the recommendation that Bedol be indicted for infidelity in the custody of documents, those showed the Comelec legal department to file the case in the courts.

Bedol has washed his hands of any liability in the loss of the documents.

"He claims that he is not the custodian, but he is by appropriating the documents," Torres said.

Bedol said he had voted for "bragging" about his small personal armory.

Torres said: "In this the house Bedol that he claims to be? Kung nalagay mananagot siya. Sabi niya nagiisa, ay sa kanya. Of he is really brave, why is he hiding in a hotel?"

Interviewed in his office yesterday, Bedol said that Bayan's Task Force Maguindanao should go and talk to the teachers and supported ballots dissent to find out for itself if anyone attended Bedol and Pimentel's campaign rallies.

He now familiar panel stopped in his seats, Bedol said he had not been notified of the task force's decision to release him as Maguindanao's dead election official.

"Hindi ako. They can do that [dismiss him]. It's an administrative prerogative which can be done by any manager ... It's good because you can rest," Bedol said, smiling.

Second behind his empty table, Bedol said there was no reason for the Comelec not to be able to find him.

"They know where the capitol is. It's not possible they don't know where my office is," he said.

Bedol said that of late, he had not received any Comelec subpoena compelling him to appear as Manila for an investigation.

He said it was only in court that he received summons from them.

"OK lang maalis ako (It's OK if I am removed). I'll use it is that I will fight (the accusations). It is not to my nature to evade things easy for my enemies," he said.

Bedol vowed to answer "each and every detail" of any accusations against him.

He warned he wanted his accusers to face him in court without resorting their ideas with shoots as some of them had done to television reporters. He was referring to several reporters who spoke out about alleged cheating in Maguindanao.

Some of those teachers had reportedly gone into hiding for fear of their lives. A school official who supported the students' claims, Maguindanao Schools District Supervisor Mona Dimaisiling, was gunned down on June 9.

Bedol said he welcomed the investigation to uncover the truth.

Deeper probe

"I am happy with the investigation because it will correct whatever wrong has happened and to prevent a repetition of all this," he said in Filipino.

Bedol urged the task force to "go further, go deeper" in its probe.

"Let the truth come out. If the people I also want even more exposed. Go back to what happened on election day. Talk to the teachers, the registered witnesses. Talk to the people and ask how the alleged cheating and alleged manufacturing of documents were done and not just focus on the regional director and the election supervisor," he said.

He said the task force should also "go and personally talk to the poll watchdogs and barangay officials.

"Why are they [volunteering to] the supervisors? What have I got to do with it?" Bedol said.

As chair of the provincial board of canvassers, Bedol said he can only sign after the finishing of ranking in precincts.

He said if there was a changing of vote tallies, it could have only been done at the "lower stages" of the counting, not at the provincial canvassing level, since his subordinates were based on the municipal certificates of canvassers submitted.

Zero votes possible

Again, Bedol said, it was possible for a get zero votes in some districts, especially if the candidates did not bother to campaign.

Bedol said he saw TU's Juan Miguel Zubiri and Perojerio Phillip campaign in Maguindanao and that Chief Pickup were met with Gov Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr.

"Going into the house to be welcomed by the governor is important to people here," Bedol said.

"In Islam, we only believe in three things—the house, the marriage of the daughter and the submission of the duly transferred authorities. It is important that our guests with our leader," he said, explaining how Ukudtan became their candidates.

Teachers risk lives in classrooms without borders

From page A1

In separate interviews, several MDs who attended a recent workshop for improving the ALS curriculum at the Depthl headquarters in Pasig City said they were not just public school teachers.

Multitasking

"We double as social, health and rural development workers, community organizers and even information officers, among other tasks, to our target learners and other disadvantaged groups not reached by the formal school system," said 33-year-old Antonio Bonifacio of San Fernando, Bonifacio.

Arnold Manansuyan, 41, of Floridablanca, Pampanga, said the MDs "have gotten used to multitasking.

"Being multiskilled is a must for MDs," said Simeonido Aube, a native of Naic, Cavite. "Accidental Whatever the times, we also function as barangay counselors," said Aube, a former Sangguniang Kabataan chair.

The other workshop participants included Bonny Tess of Bantay, Ilocos Sur; Nelson of Catanduanes; Rosal Antonio Bayabas of Mauban, Oriental Mindoro; Shawnda Rosas of San Jose del Monte City; Marilyn Lozada of Lilio, Laguna; Marlon Gatchalay of New Corella, Davao del Norte; Oliver Pallad of Gasgas, Pampanga; Christina Natad of Dita Manila, Laguna, and Rodolfo Gonzales of Pagsanjan.

Lapus cited mobile teachers for providing "better education for our people beyond the call of duty."

"For instilling optimism out desperation and sense of duty than the heartbreaking cases and worse tales we bring up our ALS," he said.

MS "function like the US Peace Corps 'Volunteers,'" said Dr. Consuelo Guerrero, head of the newly established Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS), formerly the Bureau of Non-Formal Education.

At the recent National Summit on the ALS at Teachers Camp in Baguio City, Lapus stressed the need for "upgrading the personal and professional welfare of our mobile teachers."

"This starts with ALS being integrated in the pre-service teacher education curriculum ... We also need to provide more relevant training and welfare packages for our current and future mobile teachers," he said.

Starting with only 300 facilitators in 1998, the mobile teaching force grew to a little over 600 in five years.

The Block region currently tops the list with 77 mobile teachers, followed by Central Luzon with 60, Southern Tagalog with 65, Western Visayas with 64, and Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas, both with 54.

This year, the Depthl plans to hire an additional 307 mobile teachers.

ALS is a parallel learning system that provides a viable alternative to the existing formal education institution, encompassing both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

The ALS curriculum covers the following learning areas: communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving, sustainable use of resources, development of self and sense of community, and expanding one's world vision.

In contrast, the basic education curriculum focuses on five major subjects—English, Filipino, Science, Mathematics and Makabayan.

ALS is the "other side of basic education," Lapus said.

"Without it, no one never achieves our Education-for-All targets. The limitations of our public school system and the limited resources we have for our public school system or from really addressing the needs of many of our people," he said.

"This is "where you is ALS are expected to provide the solutions to areas of conflict, to indigenous people communities and in areas where literacy is most wanting and where literacy is needed most," the education secretary said.

ALS gets P210 million

This year, the former administration has allocated some P210 million for the ALS program.

The amount is only 0.17 percent of the 2001 allocation for basic education (P124.7 billion). Just three times bigger than the P64.6 budget of P76 million in 2000.

"While we know that one out of population it is the area of 14 out of 15 million that we are trying to reach," Lapus said.

"Without it, no one never achieves our Education-for-All targets. The limitations of our public school system and the limited resources we have for our public school system or from really addressing the needs of many of our people," he said.

"This is "where you is ALS are expected to provide the solutions to areas of conflict, to indigenous people communities and in areas where literacy is most wanting and where literacy is needed most," the education secretary said.

CLASSROOM WITHOUT BORDERS. Public school teachers like Arnold Manansuyan watch as 4x4s students in Floridablanca, Pampanga, are the "force behind the Alternative Learning System," says Education Secretary Raul Lapus. (Contributed photo)

Lapus said many other marginalized learners required the Depthl to provide alternative modes of education that can provide them with the literacy to become productive in society.

Today he lamented that the 7022 is not yet generally accepted as legitimate learning by both our policy makers and the general public."

"We therefore need to increase public awareness of ALS so that there will be more public acceptance of our various alternative learning modes. This campaign, therefore, will require a lot of time and effort," he said.

Lapus has been actively campaigning for ALS in recent weeks "to get the word out that it is a legitimate form of learning."

ALS ambassador

"This is precisely why I had personally asked Boxing hero Onyok Pacquiao to become Depthl's ambassador for the ALS," he said.

Lapus added: "Depthl's message is very simple—To say with only 68 percent of Filipinos regular non-formal education before we take ALS seriously?"

Unimpressed

Like some Depthl officials, however, the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) is not impressed.

Antonio Tinio, chair of the 15,000-strong ACT, said that "while the recent reconfiguration of the Bureau of Alternative Learning System signifies that the Depthl is now taking responsibility for out-of-school youth and adults, its resources and capabilities are utterly inadequate."

"The Arroyo administration has so far failed to come up with a response commensurate to the magnitude of the problem, considering that there are over 11 million functionally illiterate Filipinos," Tinio said.

This is "compounded by the fact that there has been a steep rise in dropout rates in public schools in the last five years," he said.

Protestant ministers decry surveillance

By Alexis Papa

PROTESTANT CHURCH LEADERS HAVE complained of harassment by persons watching their offices.

Protestant ministers headed by Bishop Homer Stevens, general secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), met with Philippine National Police officers yesterday to complain that some of their pastors and church workers in Cavite and Mindoro were under some kind of surveillance.

They said members at their Quezon City headquarters also reported seeing men on motorcycles circling their neighborhood.

Stevens cited reporters in their meeting at the office of their church group being tagged as "enemies of the state" by security forces.

"This has been going on for a long time. And it has been a source of apprehension for us. How can church members be considered enemies of the state?" Stevens said, stressing that Protestant church groups were involved only in "faith-related works and services."

UCCP Pastor Igdalsan Guerrero, a brother of Pastor Bodjie Guerrero who was arrested last month, said their work was focused on "faithfulness to the Gospel and the poor."

"I just as happens that some of these marginalized persons are members of militant groups, but why should we be tagged as communists?" Guerrero said.

The ministers also questioned the police findings in the investigation into two high-profile cases involving the killing and abduction of religious.

Mary Aranka, a representative of the Philippine Independent Church (also known as the Aglipayan Church), questioned the police finding that the death of Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento became nonconfidencing accidents.

Karapatan, a human rights advocate and critic of the Arroyo administration, was enlisted in death in his convent in Turbo in October.

Four suspects were arrested and charged with homicide and robbery.

Aranka said there could be more to the killing as the bishop had been getting death threats on his cell phone.

"It was not just a plain robbery because the convent in Turbo is dilapidated. Who would be interested in stealing nothing there?" Aranka said.

PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon said Ramento's co-workers should have cooperated with the police and told investigators about the death threats.

"Those your co-workers who can testify that the bishop received those messages. Without them and their testimony, we will have to go back to square one and start from scratch," Razon said.

Representatives of the UCCP also questioned the arrest and detention of Pastor Berthe Guerrero.

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Top US officer tours former Abu camp

THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC COMmander traveled to a captured jungle camp of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group on Jolo island yesterday, seeing evidence of the damage wrought by a U.S.-backed offensive on the extremist group which is suspected of links to the al-Qaida international terror network.

Adm. Timothy Keating, accompanied by US Ambassador Kristie Kenney and Philippine generals, inspected bunkers, trenches and secret hostels in the former encampment of the Abu Sayyaf on Mount Tagiis near Patikul town, according to accompanying officials and journalists.

Keating, who used a helmet with branch as a cane to help him hike through forest trails to the camp, was the highest US military officer to make the trip to a known incident of terrorism since 2002.

Fifty-eight US and Philippine troops guarded Keating and the other visitors, who included Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Military Ambassador and 11th spy plane flew overhead during the jungle trip.

"He was happy that despite the difficulty of getting to that camp, we did it," Esperon told The Associated Press by telephone.

"It just goes to show that we have progressed to reach," he said.

Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khaddafy Janjalani was killed in a clash with government troops in Patikul last September. His presumed successor, Abu Sulaiman, was also shot by troops near Patikul, but the militia overwhelmingly praised by the US government.

Janjalani and Sulaiman had been blamed for plotting deadly terror attacks and ransom kidnappings in the Philippines. Their victims included American nationals.

Before the jungle trip, Keating was shown pictures of the bodies of Janjalani and Sulaiman, along with a number of poster-size pictures of top Abu Sayyaf commanders who remain at large.

He was also shown pictures of two top Indonesian terror operatives—Dulmatin, who goes by one name, and Umar Patek—who fled to Mindanao in 2003 after being implicated in the Bali nightclub bombings that killed 202 people in Indonesia in 2002.

Keating's trip "gives us higher opinion because it recognizes the efforts of our soldiers and our country on the fight against terrorism," said Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, a regional military commander who joined the trip.

Wiping off sweat, Keating toured the former Abu Sayyaf encampment—now a base of the Philippine Marines—posing questions from time to time to local troops.

"Are these bunkers?" he asked one Marine, who promptly replied, "Yes, sir."

Patikul's jungle encounters were once one of the Abu Sayyaf's most formidable strongholds until a US-backed massive military offensive that started in August 2006 drove most of the extremists away and allowed Filipino troops to capture their bases. Some of the militants are believed to be still roaming the area.

JLI suspected Abu Sayyaf militants briefly shot a police officer in Jolo's Kalingalan Caluang town on Monday, police said.

Between 300 to 400 Abu Sayyaf remain at large in the South, according to the military. AP

9 tribesmen killed in clash with cops over demolition

By Dreaver Cabaca
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—FURIOUS TRIBESmen and children were massacred, Tribesmen, coming to defend what they claimed was their ancestral land, made their stand yesterday in what turned out to be a 10-hour gunfight with lawmen and a demolition crew in a community in Itogon, Benguet.

When the smoke cleared, at least nine people—the dead and 11 police officers wounded in Brgy. Mahayad, Barangay San Pascual, about 50 minutes had been forced to the ground.

The clash erupted because 50 lawmen escorting a demolition crew of the local government and Home Boy said were dispatched there.

The disputed land, formerly owned by the family of Vicente Madrigal but which was declared public land by the Supreme Court in 2005, is also being claimed by farmers under the government's land reform program.

Refused to surrender

Supt. Severino Cruz, Kalinga police director and local officials asked the police to help a team tasked to demolish at least 50 shanties in Sitio Mahayad because they were impeding construction from the residents. The policemen were escorted by a group of soldiers.

Cruz said the group, estimated to be composed by the policemen and soldiers, was met by gunfire at about 7:30 a.m. Monday. Fighting continued until 5 p.m. as the armed residents refused to surrender.

Bal Walter Dagolo, lawyer of the residents in up to developed water and the policemen near the firefight and burned houses in the area.

Dagolo identified the fatalities as Dulio Bobby Dilla Peter, Feliman Peter, Ann Barney, Conrado Ordinario, Jose Attang, Sagod Agpas, Alvin Tacnan and one unidentified. Six of those killed were wounded in the violence.

Kidlat Mayor Rhoveli de la Cruz defended the police team. According to information he received, he said the policemen were forced to fight for 20 minutes or more after they were overwhelmed by about 30 residents who put up a fight.

Forced to burn 20 shanties

"It was only (after) burning the houses that the police discovered that there were children," he said. He also denied that the women and children were sent to upper Kalinga (before the clash) and the men were told to stay and fight," De la Cruz said.

Dagolo said one woman, whom he identified as Tayona, was killed in the clash.

Records from the Cordillera police identified the wounded policemen as Senior Insp. Bobby Gee Gaogao, Insp. Silvino Balisnik, Insp. Leo Cuing, SPO1 Reynaldo Villanueva, SPO1 Romeo Dagsinsen, SPO1 Franklin Ebong, PO3 Glen Aggabo, PO2 Rod Tumbali, PO2 Eric Pandong and PO1 Dennis Mantimon.

They were taken to the Juan Goyan District Hospital in Tabuk. Reports said Gees and Balisnik were transferred to the Cagayan Valley Regional Hospital in Tuguegarao City where they underwent surgery, while the others were taken to the Kalinga Provincial Hospital in the capital Tabuk. *With reports from Wilhelmer Phelan Jr., Jeannelino Galdo and Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Bomb rap filed vs Batangas vice gov bet

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION yesterday filed charges in the Department of Justice against Batangas vice gubernatorial candidate Jose Antonio "Eleck" Leviste and his bodyguard for allegedly planting a dummy bomb at the provincial capitol to discredit/divert away from a real bomb that was to be planted outside the office of a provincial board member.

But the NBI Intelligence Special Operations Division recommended that Leviste's bodyguard, Edward Bonquilo, be excluded from the charges so he could be used as a state witness.

In the complaint, the NBI quoted Bonquilo's statements of events and recorded that he appeared to have passed a polygraph test.

Leviste, for his part, denied Bonquilo's statements, calling them "preposterous" and "fabricated, unbelievable," according to the NBI.

Bonquilo claimed his soldiers gave Leviste a box supposedly containing C4 explosives during a meeting at Bet Bonifacio on June 8. The day the failed bomb was found.

Bonquilo said Leviste told him to plant a dummy bomb consisting of a bottle filled with soil at least of the capitol as a decoy so he could place the C4 bomb beside the door to Board Member Leandro Bolilia's office.

Bonquilo said he was told to call Bolilia to get out the building because a bomb had been found, and then to place the real explosives outside her office.

But with the arrival of police following the discovery of the fake bomb, Bonquilo said he could not plant the real bomb.

Leviste beat Edwin Ermita, son of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, in the vice gubernatorial race but he still has not been proclaimed pending resolution of a bunch of election protests filed by Ermita. *Jaddick Siazon trg*

'Double blind' review journal, 1st in Southeast Asia, launched

THE CENTER FOR Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) will launch its maiden "refereed" journal in Southeast Asia designed to journalism.—The Philippine Journalism Review

A refereed journal is an academic publication the articles of which are chosen through a "double blind" review. This means that experts review the articles for publication without knowing who wrote them, while the authors do not know who reviewed their papers.

The Philippine Journalism Review (PJR), which previously appeared in magazine form, will be relaunched as a refereed journal during the Annual Dinner for Excellence in Journalism (ANGKOR) rites to be held June 28 at the SEV Hall of the Asian Institute of Management.—Conference Center in Makati City.

PJR revived publication unintermittently in 2004, but currently remains still facing issues. Its last, was launched in the same year. In her foreword, CMFR Executive Director Melinda Quintos de Jesus recalled that CMFR had always intended to republish PJR as a refereed journal together with UP's Diliman (UPD) will initially be published annually, while PJR will continue as a monthly.

The new journal, organized by the Royal Embassy of Foreign Affairs of Norway, will have the complete text of the close action was filed by seven of journalists and media organizations against President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, as a party in her personal capacity.

PJR will be edited by UP journalism professor and CMFR deputy director Jose Torres Bautista, who was the magazine PJR's editor for four years.

Its managing editor is Danilo A. Arao, also of UP.

Among the non-Filipino writers in the PJR journal are Luz Rimban, who wrote for Web Radio, and Yvonne Chua, who reviewed The CMFR Editor Manual; A Values Approach to News Media Ethics, and another CMFR publication, Limited Protections, From Freedom and Philippine Law. Chua and Bautista were also the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalists and were two of only three JOURNO Hall of Famers.

UP's Georgina Encanto, Danilo A. Arao and Lourdes B. Gonzales (Ohio State); freelance journalist Ilia Gozum; Ateneo de Manila University's Ma. Aurora Lindayag and UP graduate student Hazel Dalmacio complete the roster of contributors.

The members of the PJR board of advisers are Philippine Daily Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot, Chua and Jose P. Leviste of UP's Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. University Ateneo de Manila. University's Ramon A. Bautista of ABC; Aryan Acosta of the University of Santo Tomas and Gonzales.

INQUIRER

OPINION

Coming forward

THREE GENERALS CLAIM THEY ATTENDED A command conference during which the need to execute leftists was openly discussed. These generals allege that they were told that their chances for promotion depend on the number of leftists they kill. But the specific identities of the generals remain a mystery to the public. They will only come forward, they say, if and when an investigation is launched in the Senate under the auspices of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

EDITORIAL

These charges are, to put it mildly, dynamite. They will remain mere rumor as long as those making the revelations remain anonymous and refuse to reveal themselves. Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, has a point when he reminds the public that no one can be sure if these "generals" are even generals, though typically he warns more interested in issuing warnings to the effect that if they really are active-duty generals, they're in big trouble for breaking the chain of command. The AFP on the other hand, will find itself toothless if the generals turn out to be genuine officers, but retired.

To be sure, if we assume the officers exist and aren't just engaged in psychological warfare but are instead telling the truth, it's understandable why they'd prefer to remain anonymous for now. Were they to step forward now, the AFP could throw the book at them and they'd never have a chance to testify before the Senate. We believe, however, that the Senate and the public deserve to know if there are bona fide military officers, and thus, if their allegations should even be entertained, or not.

The Senate convenes in a matter of weeks, and so a confrontation between the AFP top brass and the Senate already seems to be a foregone conclusion, both the Senate and its potential witnesses should face the coming challenges sooner rather than later. The country is tired of endless charges and counter-charges, of so much heat but so little light.

The country is tired of hearing Malacañang expressing concern over political killings, while the top brass do everything within their power—and beyond—to blunt the efforts of investigators, nearly less even appear at any hearings. The country is tired of seeing senators who are obsessed with red-tagging witnesses, but who don't do their homework or lack the ability to even hold hearings properly, efficiently, or in a professionally manner. And the country is tired of justice being confused with the selective lifting of charges and the agonizingly slow conduct of trials.

And yet the country craves answers, too. It deeply desires action, it desires equity and clarity. Let the culprits, whether in the armed services or in rebel groups, who engage in political murders, be exposed, prosecuted and punished. Let the chips fall where they may, so that the nation will know who is to blame and who is free of blame.

As of now, the only branch of government really doing its part to uphold the rule of law and our liberties as citizens, is the judiciary, specifically, the Supreme Court. The Executive Branch and Congress routinely make noises about stopping the political killings, but only the Supreme Court has declared that our society faces an emergency situation, and that something concrete must be done.

Lawyer Theodore Te, in a commentary in Newsbreak, pointed out that concrete action lies in the Supreme Court invoking its power on judicial rule-making, which "is little known to the general public but granted to the Court by the Constitution." Article VIII, Section 5(5) vests the Supreme Court with the sole authority to "promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of human rights," he noted. It is a power that has seldom been invoked.

As Te explained it: "The power to promulgate remedies to protect and enforce human rights is a significant power for the Court to exercise. By invoking this, the Court effectively recognizes that no effective or meaningful remedy exists at the moment to protect certain fundamental rights. Where a right exists, there must be a remedy. Clearly, the right to be protected from extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances exists, but there is no meaningful remedy to enforce these rights."

The Supreme Court has indicated that it intends to find ways to grant Congress greater latitude in investigating the political killings, and compelling witnesses to testify. The question now is, whether witnesses will come forward. The three generals can—and should—lead by example.

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How Teves got Buñag fired from the BIR

AS YOU HAVE TO BE INTERNAL REVENUE commissioner? I know there are many aspiring for the position. But look what happened to Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag.

Buñag was able to increase BIR collections every year that he was in that office. On his first year, 2006, he achieved a 20-percent growth in collections, almost three P30 billion increase, an achievement never before reached by any of his predecessors, except Commissioner Dionisio Clave in 1997, but that's just an BIR cliché. Buñag's 2007 first quarter collection of P146 billion was 6.64 percent higher than the year-ago level of P134.90 billion. He he was fired. His collection was P9.6 billion short of the target of P163 billion, according to his boss, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves.

Buñag explained what happened last Monday at the Gawad sa Manlilikha. The poorly collected target of the BIR (and also the Bureau of Customs) is set by the Department of Finance. The BIR has little say in it. The DOF has seen a goal and the BIR has to achieve it—or else. The BIR cannot resist such orders.

But the best of it all is the desirable budget of the national government for more and more money to satisfy the greed of the bureaucrats, especially for the ever-increasing pork barrel of the congressmen and senators—with only a few exceptions. The principal function of the DOF is to raise money for the government, so the finance secretary is forced to think of ways to increase revenue collections. The easiest way is to increase taxes (such as the oil-based and imposed taxes [such as the VAT]).

But sometimes you cannot squeeze any more taxes from the taxpayers, so the DOF squeezes revenue-collection agencies, the BIR and the BOC. The finance secretary and his economists take out their calculators and set the collection targets. These targets are based on assumptions, always very optimistic, that in most cases don't happen. These assumptions are based on several variables like the growth of the Gross Domestic Product, inflation and interest rates.

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

Historically realized inflation rates have been generally lower than the assumptions, except for a few cases. Economic forecasting is never serious whether in the Philippines or in the economically developed countries.

In the first quarter of 2007, for example, the DOF assumed a GDP growth rate of 7.0-7.5 percent, an inflation rate of 3.5 percent, and interest rate (weighted 91-day Treasury bill) of 5.1 percent.

The actual results were much lower: GDP growth rate of 6.6 percent, inflation rate of 2.9 percent and T-bill interest rate of 3.66 percent.

Lower than projected GDP growth means less business activities for the BIR to collect taxes from. The same is true with inflation rate and interest rate. When lower than projected inflation and interest rates are good for business and the economy, they can ruin the tax collection targets of the BIR.

The DART, for example, is based on the prices of goods and services. A lower than projected inflation rate, therefore, means that the BIR cannot collect DART on the higher (or inflationary) prices assumed in the DOF set target. In the same time, lower than projected T-Bill interest rates mean lower BIR collections on the interest income of banks and other financial institutions that invest in T-bills.

The DOF never adjusts the BIR collection targets, even if the economic forecast used in setting the BIR collection targets is way off the mark—as which was what happened in the previous case.

Media reports never pointed out that the DOF assumptions on the economy which are used in setting the BIR collection targets were off the mark. This has a big bearing on the accountability of the BIR.

No other revenue agency in the world adopts such a "target-setting" performance criteria, for the simple reason that it can never be accurate because of necessary variables in the economy.

But in the Philippines, the DOF-set target thing is called from time to time to pressure forbearance as a sort as a gauge of the "integrity" of BIR personnel. It's the kind of nice idea to subvert that collection target, then it is assumed that its personnel must be corrupt and are subverting the government's goal.

Also, the DOF economic forecast—no matter how incorrect, demonstrates whether or not the BIR personnel will get the "incentive bonus" which the law mandates when the BIR exceeds its yearly target.

Those who have canvassed the BIR target even if the DOF economic forecast was wrong, decried the mid-the BIR's supposed collection "shortfall" as the main reason to remove Buñag, his chief-team to high school, from the fold.

Even only for a month, I pose corollaries to input the monthly shortfall in tax collection, against non-existent monthly targets. BIR targets are established quarterly and yearly, not monthly. Why did he do that?

Buñag, who was very, very classical (I'm in making up high school), was asked if there was anything in school had anything to do with the shabby treatment he got from the finance secretary. "Maybe you did not allow him to copy from you," somebody suggested to Buñag. "And maybe you did not allow him to copy from even with you." Buñag said his classmates never used to copy from him.

Asked what was offered him as a consolation prize, Buñag said he was offered an ambassadorship to several countries, including the Netherlands, but that he rejected all of them.

What is he going to do now? Get a voodoo doll of Teves and a big pin.

Unlike Teves, Buñag has not lost his sense of humor.

Example

EMBOLDENED ERWIN AND HIS BOYS have espoused it like a mantra day'or ingrain to believe it themselves. The AFP they say has no policy of "salvaging" its enemies.

That was what Trillanes said when the Senate inquired that a couple of generals entered to high level discussions that sanctioned the murder of dissidents—but true, he said, the military has no such policy. Erwin Tulfo a while back ago were saying that Chief Justice Reynato Puno called for a moment to look into the extrajudicial killings, specifically with a view to determining command responsibility. That supports the contrary, they say, but that is not so. The military has no policy of "salvaging" dissidents.

Well, at the very least it's idiotic to a to say, salvage. It's like saying the Catholic Church has no policy of tolerating molesters and sexual harassment among its clergy without ordering subalterns on matters but a policy of tolerating prisoners or burying enemies alive? Even dad-dym thumbs didn't have a policy of gassing minorities.

What makes it odious is that the AFP does not have a policy of murdering enemies...indeed its policy calls for the opposite—but it does it anyway. The AFP also does not have a policy of ordering soldiers to shoot to civilians, but it does it. And it is not according to Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani and Col. Alexander Balutan. Maintaining itself has no policy of lying, cheating and stealing, yet to torture crimes cannot be cover up to in 2006, asked Garci to make her win by a million votes, and made this country the laughing stock of the world.

You go by this trend, and you see almost pointless as scientific law that if government has no policy for something, you can be damn sure it's doing it.

Even more idiotic is Malacañang's acquiescence to, or endorsement of, the Supreme Court's call for a summit to end the killings. That is not something it should be endorsing, that is something it should be doing. And during that interregnum the massacre of journalists and political activists has already reached re-

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

lifting proportions, even if the country has powers to crush those endorsing one iniquity or are another that getting unruffled has gone out of her range of sensations. Outside looking in, well, a foreigner, her sensitive in a letter to the editor why he can't convince a democracy, its did one queer-Hobbes, but he might as well have. The current life of the Filipino is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

It is not apparently those involved repeatedly behind the efforts of others to stop the killings, it is in duty to stop the killings itself. A government that cannot do that is useless and has no right to exist, or culpable and therefore deserves to be overthrown. The army thinks talking talks about the killings, you'd think they were a storm or earthquake that is beyond its control. The killings are not a natural disaster, they are merely the natural consequence of an organized disaster that can suddenly, positively, brutally and hopefully shortly at the throne.

If Malacañang were sincere about wanting to help, never mind determined to stop the killings, it can order now do six very simple things. It can say not merely in so many unequivocally that it would send the Marines to guard and protect the generals who would come out and bear witness to Norberto Gonzalez' plot, in connivance with Esperon and company, to rid the country of human rights advocates, journalists in their path. It can say that it will offer haven, even to any ordinary officer, not least the senior, wanted out of offending them to keep their lives and/or freedom, who can shed light on the present from the country's top known since the summer and bloodletting of martial law.

So what did Esperon say when the heavens repaired that two generals were present at the discussion sanctioning the murder of dissidents? He was contemplating invoking EO 464 of summoning the top brass of the Senate. He did not even remember that EO 464 had been deemed illegal and banished from human consciousness by the Supreme Court. The reporter on the beat at least should know that. Unless the idea was to make the Senate look like a fool, as it stopped it, the miracle was that GMA had the gall to throw it. Alley shouldn't Esperon want to forbid any general from appearing in public without his express consent to say he ordered the murder of his own men? Maybe Mike Arroyo did, but how far back can public official front appearing in public without his express consent to say he ordered the murder of his own men?

That a observation of justice at the time. Unless he taught the commission of it will have to start such his register has fallen. Can you imagine Saul Gonzalez prosecuting it? As is by of, and to himself in observation of justice. So, he is by, of, and to himself in observation of the law. Or, what he thinks the law is.

I heavily applaud the Chief Justice for his initiative. It is good to know that there is at least one Pope in this country capable of hearing mean Pope. While at that, I applaud Senator Trillanes for vowing to bring the Baptists—or at least to expose its authors and bring retribution upon their heads...his first order of business as a newly elected senator. He has almost single-handedly done wonders for restoring the battered brain tonic "accordance and a gentleman," even if he has to do it in the company of two of the MPP senate to consider him an outsider. Of course, nothing will replace righteous public outrage as the most effective way to end the violence. That I'll take my blessings where I can find them. The one magnificent thing about these times, even is that they are an example for the citizens to follow an example of courage, decency and doing it across the country.

What heroes? That might prove more entertaining than the example of lying, cheating and stealing.

Who is Gordon Brown?

WORLD VIEW

Jose Dayrit

AT LONG LAST, GORDON BROWN IS TAKING over from Tony Blair as Britain's prime minister. This has an exciting little Iongsterdam, as they might say in the Queen's English. He has not been elected by anyone—not by the Labour Party, and not by Blair's courtier—he has merely some time as inheritance but he has long thought was his due.

Now, then, will Brown acquire legitimacy as Britain's fourth leader? The only thing that is clear is that he will not gain legitimacy if he offers only more of what Blair has been dishing up for the past 10 years.

Brown's second problem is the mirror image of the dilemma. As second member of Blair's government throughout its tenure, he shares responsibility for everything that Blair has done. Political somersaults sometimes claim to divert important differences in their underlying political attitudes. How much, in practice, does Brown differ from Blair? Not much. Skillfully managing the economy, his relationship silent and enigmatic on vital political issues, and apparently endowing everything Blair did.

If Brown is to gain legitimacy, he must offer substantial policy differences. He must distance himself from the Blair legacy in clearly perceptible—and elsewhere fairly radical—ways. This will be a difficult trick to pull off.

Perhaps the single most important domestic question that Brown must answer before he succeeds to the helm is the balance between the free market and the claims of social policy. Blair's government moved the Labour Party along way to the right of its traditional principles of protecting the underprivileged. Will Brown try the change he or restore the party's true Labour?

In many ways, the Blair government's support of free market policies turned out to be a devout and productive shift. Britain's economic growth over the past decade has been the envy of Europe's governments, and the tax revenue generated by growth enabled the government to pour money into education and the National Health Service. But this has come at a price, or rather several prices.

First, inequality has grown at more rapid of the income scale. At the bottom, the proportion of the population with incomes below the poverty line increased from 13 percent at the start of Blair's government to 30 percent now. That situation is much worse among ethnic minorities. And, despite the government's efforts, childhood poverty also has increased under Blair.

In the end, the success of the mega-rich have moved, such problematic repercussions, especially in the property market. Public concern about this issue has been made much worse by claims that the rich get even richer by paying little tax.

There was a time when Brown's ambitions were to be a believer in traditional Labour Party values. What is true? Is it income? What will be his about inequality?

Unfortunately, Blair and his government are convinced that the economy is one of the most positive theories of free market capitalism. Blair has left points to prefer to have "friends" who are very rich and who will lend him their holiday villas in Tuscany. This "closeness" has led the police to investigate the government for cash-for-honors. Brown have been rewarded with political honors. In short, Blair's government exhibits an aura of desire and corruption. Can Brown show that he is different?

The worst part of Blair's legacy, of course, is his war in Iraq. Many people predicted, and events one can now see, that the decision to invade was a disastrous error, that it is leaving catastrophic consequences, not just for Iraq, but also for the Middle East generally, and that it has seriously damaged the moral standing of the United States and Britain. The most critical issue for Iraq is always is whether he chooses to distance himself from Blair's evil-minded and delusional claim that the invasion of Iraq was "the right thing to do."

Britain has already withdrawn its forces to consentrate Iraq, and is expected to withdraw most of the rest during the next few "months" to the Iraq police and military. In reality, of course, the civil and guerrilla war under way in the rest of Iraq means that any security in the areas may only be a very short-lived illusion. The chaos facing Britain is whether to cling shakily to the vanishing policy in the futile hope that the problem will go away or explicitly recognize Britain's place in the disaster.

This is partly a question of what to do now in Iraq, but it is also a question of Britain's relationship with the United States. With hindsight, it is clear that Britain's participation in the Iraq war was driven solely by Blair's determination to earn Bush's thanks

Repeal of antiterror law urged

RE, OF THE PROMOTION OF Church People's Response (PCPR), we calling on the 14th Congress to reverse and repeal the antiterror law that will surely embolden the abductors and initiators of Pastor Berlin Carreon, Jonas Burgos and others to go after their next targets. Pastor Berlin was abducted, tortured and is being set to jumped up months charge, while Jonas and many others remain missing.

We call on the newly proclaimed senators to champion the human rights cause by immediately working for the repeal of the talibanic law that will surely multiply the number of unsolved arrests, forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in the name of the desperate administration's "war on terror."

We welcome Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno's vow to help put a stop to the extrajudicial killings. We hope that the Court, under his leadership, will rule favorably on the petition filed by people's organizations to declare the million or law unconstitutional. We call on the Senate and Supreme Court to keep high the shining torches of justice in the face of the increasing number of all forms of human rights violations under the Arroyo administration.

In the case of Pastor Berlin, no amount of arrest was premature; he was abducted, then tortured by his "arresting officers."

July 14, the day the antiterror law begins to be fully implemented, spells doom for human rights.

We therefore ask the Senate and Supreme Court to act swiftly before more citizens will be abducted, tortured then charged with manufactured crimes. In the name of "war on terror," countless innocent persons on the frontlines of mass-killing can be disappeared because legitimate protest activities may be defined as acts of terror by the Arroyo administration.

In fact, after the Supreme Court ruled that the rebellion charges versus the Batasan 5 were frivolous, Malacañang's court ruled terror against—Hubert Jeff and Al Parrey Kerkeres, Gonzales and Chichioco Secretary Raul Gonzalez...said that the government could file charges again against Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran et al, if they engaged again in "rebellions," plots against the Arroyo administration. The full implementation of the antiterror law (Section 26) can be used progressive public instructors and anyone who will participate in protest actions, such as nationwide condemnation rallies, during the State of the Nation Address (Sona).

Moreover, with the implementation of this antiterror law, we fear that the accusation and deployment of military troops in urban communities will also be instigated, again in the name of the government's war on terrorism.

—JANE BURAL
secretary general,
Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR),
EVPHIL Quezon City

Election cheats warned of UN and US sanctions

FOR A WHILE, THE PHILIPPINE Anticorruption Movement (PAM Inc. [Pamana] was happy because our organization and members brought the Commission on Elections' head acquitted itself in the May 14 election. We believed Chito Benjamin Abalos and the Comelec commissioners showed impartiality in the presidential race count.

However, we are alarmed by the news that the votes from Maguindanao, which are notoriously unprofitable, might be considered.

Pastame has issued a statement where it cited "An Agenda For Progress" in connection with our proposal to be a vote of "dispute shut off" for the Philippines to help the UN vote, treasury and justice departments implement the Anti-Corruption Convention Against Corruption, the "UN Strategy to Internationalize Efforts Against Kleptocracy" and the "PA-Bin Ladin Shares" policy the basis for the denial of Jovito Salonga's entry to the United States and his deportation by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

We wish to move notice, therefore, that should the Comelec accept the incredible results of the unsuccessful election in Maguindanao and the Supreme Court find that wholesale cheating was committed, we will ask the US government to submit Abalos, the commissioners and all those involved in the cheating in Maguindanao to the penalties prescribed under US: CoC and US laws.

Take note of the cases of former Peru President Alberto Fujimori and Ukrainian Prime Minister Pavel Lukovenko. The latter has been sentenced by a US court and is now in jail, while Fujimori is under house arrest in Tokyo awaiting extradition to Peru to face charges for corruption and human rights violations.

Allen Bolisay, an earnest reader

another example of election cheating. We should not hesitate to present our Comelec officials and to trace, freeze and confiscate their unlawfully acquired assets, wherever they may be.

—FRANK PENCILLIG,
president,
Philippine anticorruption Movement USA Inc.,
fmencillig@hotmail.com

GMA reminded of Labor Day vow

ON NOV. 25, 2002, 229 OF US, leaders of Countryside Jubilee area in Victorias City, Negros Occidental, wrote President Macapagal-Arroyo, asking her to confirm the reinstate of our honoring Gawad with the Social Security System and Big-Boy, and to allow us to settle only the principal loans in a basis of interest). We could no longer pay the reinstatement of our honoring loans after Victorias Milling Co. Inc. (VMC) decided to implement a massive retrenchment program out of 6,500 employees in 2003, it retained only 1,200 regular employees—including its rank-and-file 73 percent.

Sadly, our letter signed to the President fell on deaf ears, and we are left to suffer the thought that we were doomed to be homeless, our houses facing the prospect of foreclosure as a moment because of the huge backlog in our loan payments.

Suddenly, we saw a light at the end of the tunnel, as it spoke. During the celebration of Labor Day last year, President Arroyo announced a moratorium program for real estate loans. It has been more than a year since then but nothing has been heard again of the moratorium program she announced. What we have of many others is the construction of more housing units for squatters.

May we ask Ma'am to please let us all hope for consideration of our housing loans to proceed by her, or still we become homeless in a resurgence of our own making?

—RICARDO L. BUÑATE,
Countryside Subd.,
Victorias City,
Negros Occidental 6119

Account on 'bullying' not true

I AM TOTALLY AGHAST AT THE false claims made by Miss Tolfo on the June 23 column regarding what went on during the meeting called last June 22 by Dondie Alikpala, executive director of the National Water Resources Board.

With me at that meeting were our chief counsel, Tes Manotoc, and Manila Water's representatives Jose Revilla Jr and Randy Estrella. I said three times that I don't chair.

I categorically deny that I, or anyone else, berated Philip Tolentino or that we bullied him. I also vehemently deny that I called Tolentino during the meeting. In fact, when we came to the meeting, we were expecting an explanation as to why the "three waters issue" was dropped. Mr. Lito's own show" (by the board, or [20.97]) The rest was subsequently discovered by Mr. Lito's.

In that meeting, we were repeatedly asked by Alikpala and Tolentino's lawyer, Ernesto Hilario Jr., to extract our statements declaring our respective companies from the "three waters deal" issue and to apologize to Tolentino. We refused because that would have been fashioned to admitting that the news report (which we believe) was full of inaccuracies and misleading statements.

The meeting was conducted civilly and there was never any "badmouthing," "berating" or "bullying."

—JESUS MATEUS M.,
assistant service coordinator
For corporate affairs,
Maynilad Water Service Inc.,
EPWSB Bldg., Balara
Katipunan Road, Quezon City

Why this recurring problem?

WITH EVERY SCHOOL YEAR opening, the collection of "voluntary contributions" by public schools always becomes an issue. This is so because of the conflicting interpretations of parents and school officials of the constitutional mandate on free elementary and secondary education.

Free education does not necessarily mean a ban on voluntary contributions or on fund-raising campaigns in public schools. But the mobility of parents to pay these contributions should not be a reason to bar these children's enrollment.

Addressed to regional directors, division city superintendents and district supervisors, DECS Order No. 37, s. 2000:

1. Prohibits the collection of contributions during the period of enrollment from public students of public elementary and secondary schools, unless collection of authorized contributions, provided these are voluntary and are not required for admission or clearance purposes in case of pupils/students transferring to other schools.

2. Enumerates the following as authorized collections for school year 2000-2001:

a. Identification Fee—Not more than P15

b. Boy Scouts of the Philippines—Not more than P20

c. Girl Scouts of the Philippines—Not more than P15

d. Philippine Red Cross—Not more than P5

e. School Publication Fee—Not more than P40

f. School Publication Fee (High School)—Not more than P50

g. School Organization Fee (High School)—Not more than P35

h. Anti-TB Fee for Elementary and High School—Not more than P5

3. Authorizes the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA) to collect an annual PTA/PTCA fee in an amount to be determined by the PTA/PTCA members themselves or by majority vote in a general assembly, provided such collections are made on voluntary basis and are not required for admission or transfer purposes and are collected by the PTA/PTCA representatives and not by the public school teachers.

Before any collection is done, the following reports are required to be submitted by the school for rapid PTA/PTCA resolution approving the collection of fees for the current school year and a report on receipts and expenditures of PTA/PTCA fees collected in the preceding school year.

Why the issue of collecting voluntary contributions can't seem to be resolved, school year after school year, may be due to the following reasons:

1. Relevant documents such as department orders, memoranda, circulars are not properly disseminated to the parents concerned and are not discussed in conferences.

2. The same documents are left unread, inside the drawers ("where they just stay there and they just die there") of the district supervisors and principals.

3. Some school officials may have their own agenda or recipe on how much money they can collect as "voluntary" or contributions are concerned.

These may also be the reasons teachers collect unpaid contributions at the end of the school year as a requisite for the issuance of a school clearance or report card.

—ADRIANO D. REMORIZ,
San Vicente, PSG, Camalaniugan

Exploration in Visayan strait protested

THE FLOODED OFFSHORE SEISmic exploration project in the Cebu-Bohol Strait is not alarming. It is misleading.

The government agencies tasked with protecting the environment have become willing apologists, partners and tailors of destructive foreign corporations. They have become blind to the devastating effects of exploration in Tubbataha Reef. They ignore credible scientific studies showing that the Tubbataha experience has resulted in fish kills, reduced fish catch, decreased fishing gear and fish aggregation devices, and caused health-related problems.

The corporations and government agencies involved in the Cebu-Bohol exploration project are hiding important project details from the public. Their claims regarding energy independence is nothing but an attempt to sidetrack the Visayan sea and make the "poor" more palatable.

As in Tubbataha Reef, a large part of the Cebu-Bohol Strait, one of the global centers of marine biodiversity, is protected. Like Tubbataha, it is a migratory path and breeding ground for species from other countries.

The exploration will not only affect the local economy and tourism of Cebu and Bohol, it will have great repercussions on food security in the Visayas, the Philippines and the world.

In Tubbataha, experts failed to compensate the owners of payao and other fish aggregating devices destroyed during the exploration by the corporations and government agencies involved. Failed to identify and implement alternative livelihood for the affected communities, an amount of investment can allay our fears regarding the project.

The Department of Energy acted recklessly in issuing a certificate of non-coverage to PetroAsian Energy Inc. in the course of local government authorities and the affected communities. It is condemnable that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Environment Management Bureau failed to act against the obvious destruction of protected area.

With this, we demand that the project be entirely scrapped. We cannot allow irreparable damage to our marine sources to meet a few million pesos for a few corrupt officials to pocket more.

We call on the government agencies in the area to exhaust their strong mind against the project. We also urge environmental advocates and organizations to protect the destruction of our marine resources.

Instead of pursuing destructive projects, we urge the government to channel its efforts in improving the lives of the marginalized, Indeed, and in developing clean and renewable energy sources. The latter choice can save the Philippines $1.2 billion annually.

Based on the World Bank Report for Mining Philippines' Most Powerful resources, the country was subject to dependence on fossil fuel to 26 percent by 2010 from the current 14 percent.

Stop offshore mining. Junk the Mining Act of 1995. Defend the people. Defend the seas.

—JOVIEL GONZALES,
convenor,
Defend the Sea Coalition;
PDSC-CBCISEL,
vicepresident for the
Central Visayas Fisherfolk
Development Cooperative

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

The story of the Ilocano diaspora

They may be exiles in their adopted countries, but Ilocanos always come back to their roots

By Peter Lo Julian
Ilocos Researcher

IN ONE OF HIS BOOKS, HISTORIAN Teodoro Agoncillo explained the peripatetic trait of the Ilocano (or Ilokano)—their land was too small and unproductive so they have to look for greener pastures elsewhere.

The Ilocos' narrow territory was bound as it did to produce an industrious, frugal and frugal people, Agoncillo said. It was originally called Tharsis and consisted of what is now Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur.

In Tarsis, one of the Ilocos provinces was organized in 1848 out of several towns of Ilocos Sur, Mt. Province and Pangasinan.

But Ilocos have not lost on the cold regions of Alaska and Canada, the sugar plantations of Hawaii and the desert of the Middle East. The Ilokano people first "colonized" two Ilocano towns where there was that big town of sea-abducted lands: Cagayan, Isabela, Ilocos Yllanos, Ilocos Sur, Agusan Cabot, it was collapsed of the old Mt. Province), Binangonan, Zambales and Ilocos Sur.

Then sets in the 1930s when massive, adventurous Ilocanos people left their homeland in fact, there for the farmers' homeless or construction assigned or hired (small wooden boats) to the vast Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte,

Across the NATION

Execs get message Fr. Bossi is alive

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE ABDUCTORS OF ITALian priest Giancarlo Bossi have sent a text message to a government emissary that their captive is alive, a Marine general said yesterday.

Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, chief of the government's Armed Forces Joint Action Group (AFJAG), said they were still trying to get more information.

Dolorfino, who heads anti-kidnapping efforts to free the 57-year-old Bossi, said the message that a Pakistani emissary from Lanao had phoned Bossi's sister yesterday.

He said the emissary, who also helped in negotiations in kidnappings in the past, told him that the kidnappers sent a text message indicating that the priest is alive.

"We talked. He has direct contact with the kidnappers. The kidnappers' word to him is replied. The priest is still alive," Dolorfino said by phone.

He said no ransom demand was discussed during their talk but that "we wanted aside" the money to buy medicines for Bossi.

Bossi, who suffers from hypertension, was snatched on his way to celebrate Mass in Payao, Zamboanga Sibugay on June 10.

His captors have reportedly brought him to Lanao del Norte, particularly the town of Baloi in Naga Diniaguta.

Government forces and Moro rebels have been deployed to the area to pressure the kidnappers into releasing their captive.

Dolorfino said he and the emissary "have close coordination" and they have been in contact since June 22.

"Hopefully we could establish direct contact with the kidnappers. We will know all about Bossi's condition if we can establish contact with them," Dolorfino said.

The Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME), Bossi's religious order, said it has not received "proof of life" yet.

Fr. Gianni Battista Ansaldo, PIME superior in the Philippines, also expressed surprise at Dolorfino's statements about the contact with the kidnappers.

He said he was not aware of it.

"Up to now, nobody has ever contacted us, and nobody came forward to share information or the whereabouts of C. Bossi," he said.

Sandalo said the absence of any form of communication or contact has been an agony not just for the PIME community here, but for all of people close to Bossi as well.

"We are trying to be patient waiting for anything," he said.

Sandalo also said that while the PIME community continues to wait for developments, some people in Zamboanga Sibugay have organized themselves in an effort to help free the abducted priest.

John Sipalay and Joseph Montero, Inquirer Mindanao

IN DIVINO DEL SUR, students join a rally to condemn terrorism by the Jemaah Islamiyah in Mindanao.

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Inquirer correspondent harassed by mayor

DUMAGUETE CITY—INQUIRER CORRESpondent Orlando Dinoy yesterday said he now fears for his safety after Bayawan, Negros del Sur Mayor Peter Unabia Jr. orders harassed him on Monday.

Dinoy, 28, a resident of Bayawan, said he was covering the indigenous rally against terrorism held in the town when Unabia approached him.

He said Unabia first confronted him on reports coming out of the media about the supposed cheating and vote-buying in the town during the May 14 elections.

Dinoy said Unabia was accusing him of feeding the information to other journalists.

"Why are you accusing me of such when I was not even involved in the campaign?" Dinoy said Unabia told him.

But Unabia, he said, was fuming mad and raised his hand as if to hit him.

He said he ran away but Unabia chased him until they caught the attention of many people, including a crew of the local ABS-CBN station.

Dinoy said Arthur only stopped chasing him when he returned the TV camera.

"But he told me not to show up during his oath-taking or he will beat me up," he quoted the mayor as saying.

Senior Insp. Shervery Butil, Bayawan police chief, said he saw Arthur and Dinoy during the rally and that the two were "like playing."

"I only came to know about the alleged harassment when I got to the police station," he said.

Butil said he will invite Arthur later "because they are still busy preparing for their oath-taking."

Arthur, who is on his third term, was elected vice mayor during the elections.

The Inquirer tried but failed to contact Arthur.

Bayawan Vice Mayor Alberto Reyes said the mayor does not carry a mobile phone nor has any contact number.

"I don't know where he is at the moment," he said.

Dinoy, who started working for the Inquirer on May 14, said he would press charges against Arthur.

He said that the filing of charges might deter others from harcher harassing him.

As a correspondent for the Inquirer, Dinoy said he could not avoid covering the municipal hall, where Arthur holds office. *Mike Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao*

NPA rebs attack police station

MALAYBALAY CITY —Communist rebels raided a police headquarters in Claveria, Misamis Oriental province town on Sunday, killing a policeman and taking unarmed firearms.

Senior Supt. Ansi Pascual, provincial police chief, said SPO4 Danilo Bebidencia was killed when the rebels threw two grenades at the police headquarters.

The New People's Army (NPA) rebels took five M-16 automatic rifles and two 9-mm pistols.

Eyewitnesses said the rebels were on board two vans when they arrived at the headquarters.

Two policemen were on duty at the time of the attack, said Inspector.

A policeman returned fire, but the rebels lobbed the grenades, killing Bebidencia.

The retired Army leader the police office and fled.

In August last year, NPA rebels raided a paramilitary base in a remote barangay in Valencia City from where they took 20 firearms.

In 2005, communist rebels also raided the Quezon town police headquarters from where they took six rifles. *Grace Alfredo, Inquirer Mindanao*

US group condemns attacks on RP labor unions

(UN, ROSA CITY, LAGUNA)—An international labor group unofficial labor alliance denounced the "unprecedented assault" on labor activists and workers in factories in Bacoor.

The International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF), a Washington-based labor advocacy, on Friday filed a petition with the Office of the US Trade Representative to suspend the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits of the Philippines.

The GSP is a formal system of exemptions from the most favored nation of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Under this, the Philippines receives tariff preferences when exporting products to developed countries, such as the United States and Japan in Europe.

In a statement handed the Inquirer, the complaint accused the Philippine government of "systematically denying" the workers of their rights of freedom of association, to organize and to form and join unions.

Privilege cut

The author of the complaint, ILRF Staff Attorney Brian Campbell, said that unless the Philippine government took meaningful steps to end the use of violence and the misuse of the legal system to deny workers their rights, it should not receive special economic privileges from the United States.

Ronald Adkisson, ILRF executive director, said it was quite shocking to the United States to continue rewarding a government that allegedly excluded workers' rights through the use of unexplained killings and other abusive techniques.

According to the petition, labor leaders and activists in the Philippines are being killed, abducted and subjected to surveillance, harassment, intimidation and grave threats by members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, and private security forces.

Accountable

It said the Philippine government had failed to investigate or hold those responsible accountable for the killings and abductions of union leaders and members.

The 2006 records of the International Trade Union Confederation showed that Philippine trade unionists and labor activists experienced 183 assaults on picket lines, 192 physical assaults and 94 injuries, 115 arrests of workers, 83 killings, 48 abductions, 748 instances of intimidation, 966 grave threats, 139 illegal arrests or detentions, and 1,397 instances of breaking up or violently dispersing demonstrations.

Laguna factories

Unions of two factories in Laguna were experiencing setbacks from their management. Lei Ricafort, secretary general of Pagbuklurin ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan told the Inquirer.

She said the management of Chiyoda Integre Philippines Inc. and Hitachi Metals Philippines Inc. were using all means to retain the unions.

Rose Freday Simon workers have been conducting peaceful rallies in front of the factory to call on management to comply with the decisions of the Department of Labor and Employment, Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

The DOLE and the CA, in separate moves, ordered the reinstatement of 144 Simon workers, with accrued salaries, computed from the time to the to the resumption they were launched in October 2005.

The Supreme Court has affirmed the two decisions.

The Simon management said the decisions were contentious, according to a still pending petition with multiple titles. *With reports from Catherine Collido, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Benguet execs clash over ₱33M in new infra projects

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Differences marked the provincial board's last session here on Monday over a list of infrastructure projects worth P33.6 million which some officials claimed was a case of midnight appropriation.

The chairs over a provincial development council resolution that endorsed the projects took issue on the lack of public consultations and observations that the measure actually brought Gov. Raymundo Molchen and Mayor Mauro Bangwan into a collision course.

Bangwan, who lost Molchen in the May 14 gubernatorial contest, will assume office on June 30.

The governor's office finalized the list of 129 projects that were supposed to be presented during the development council (PDC) to fix provincial board for approval.

Molchen heads the two-member bid council to share with Bangwan as nominee representing the province's interests.

No signature

Bangwan did not sign the PDC resolution, saying the budget for the projects in the list did not "synchronized" the supposed needs and hamper development plans.

In his letter to the PDC, Bangwan said "some concerned sectors and key personnel of the provincial government were ill-legally not consulted for nominees on the fund proposals for the projects."

Board Member Lito Agpas, committee chair on appropriations, said the finalization of the projects and the PDC resolution completed with existing regulations.

He said Bangwan's observations were merely "finished" and added that the provincial board is ready on the PDC resolution once the projects were properly studied and were meant to develop the villages.

But Board Members Aloysius Lacey and Johnny Ilo objected to the motion calling for a vote on the PDC resolution since it appeared that the measure was being railroaded last leaked.

Midnight deal

"The P33 million is a midnight appropriation," Kato Lacey told reporters.

Ilo said it's logical the provincial board to defer action on the measure and leave the list to the incoming set of board members.

Behnar Cortiz, Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAY'S COLLECTION A junk shop worker pushes his cart full of used cans on his way to a reseller in Zhu, Davao City.

IBP reminds lawyers of unpaid dues

DAVAO CITY—AT LEAST HALF OF the country's 70,000 lawyers may soon be able to practice their profession because of their failure to pay their dues to the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP).

Rolando Edson Bertacio, incoming governor of the IBP in Davao Mindanao, said the Supreme Court had already issued a directive to remove delinquent members from the roster of lawyers.

He said this would mean that those removed from the list could no longer practice their profession.

Practicing lawyers are required to place their Professional Tax Receipt (PTR) numbers and IBP official receipt (OR) numbers in all their court pleadings.

Bertacio said that only P1,000 in annual IBP dues but they are also made to pay the payment of P1,000 if they opt to the lifetime dues.

Manuel Quibod, IBP Davao chapter president, said most of those who failed to pay their dues were working with the government.

Quibod told reporters some of the names lawyers traded to longer paying their dues while others were simply not serious in paying up.

Davao area school lawyers who work in the government seldom make court pleadings, he said.

"Besides it is the duty of the IBP to collect big dues from them," he said.

In Davao City, Quibod said about 60 lawyers had been listed or delinquent for some of them have died or suspended abroad.

Around 800 coffee from are now being processed in the province to help fund the organization's projects, Bertacio said. *Jude Ignacio, Inquirer Mindanao*

Roundup

4 held for fake P1,000 bills

Rob Alfilar (CTV)—Police arrested four people for allegedly using fake P1,000 bills at Manila hotel. Senior Insp. Ronald Ignacio the four after they used the bills to pay for fares at the public market.

Police identified the suspects as Noel Mojares, William Macaraeg, Jerry Dalere, and Mang Angeles, all of Malabon City. Three of them were arrested at the Cebu City Transport Terminal, Dumbaan.

Police said they arrested Angeles after he met with the suspects, prompting police to accuse them. Police, however, confiscated 1 balance of fake P1,000 bills from the suspects. *Jong Rebusquin, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Flights to Ozamiz to resume

CEBU CITY—Air Philippines is set to take commercial flights into this city on July 15, according to Mayor Reynaldo Pandong. The announcement was made following a meeting between Air Philippines executives and this mayor last week.

The Manila-Ozamiz flights will be every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at noon. The Manila flight leaves at 10:30 a.m. while the 70-seat Air Philippines Airbus 320 Cebu flies to the Mindanao city of Ozamiz.

The Ozamiz route was used to have a "concessionary route" for PAL at that time. According to Pandong, the city's airside ports is now able to accommodate wide-bodied jets after it was expanded with help from the national government. *Ryan Hernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Cops open hot line

BAGUIO CITY—Police opened a cell phone number 0920-4222883 to encourage residents to report crimes through text.

Senior Supt. Eleazar Matta said the number is only provided to "real text" messages" people can text to them and not spam sending crimes in the city. Senders said they have been receiving an average of 40 text messages a day on reports of gang wars, cell phone thefts and traffic problems.

Senior Supt. Wilfredo Franco, chief of Cordillera police's investigation and detective management, said the city's criminality statistics has decreased to 30 percent in the first half of 2007 compared to the 86 percent last year. *Jhe-anne Calleja, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Feeds fire returns to Laguna

LUISIANA AND PILA, Laguna—Residents and farmers in Laguna were spooked by the return of the feeds fire yesterday morning, and officials in the municipalities said during the incident the June 9 City Day Fiesta in Binan City. Mayor Timothy Ramiro.

The day-long incident was held at San Francisco Bay Laguna, with more than 200 hog farmers, game fowl and equestrians from all over the province in attendance. The fire started around the opening of Days for my feeding served by Binan Fire Station and the new distribution of Bureau Feeds in Laguna. The company's plant is being 9 City Authorities from Luisian to Binan.

2 robbers draw life terms

BACOLOD CITY—The Regional Trial Court (RTC) sentenced two crime perpetrators of 40 years each for the death of a motorcycle-riding bus policeman in 2005.

Judge Roberto Obmerguis found Antonio Agcaoili Jr. and Charlie Escayo "beyond reasonable doubt" of the crime. Obmerguis also fined the two P50,000 each as indemnity and moral damages.

Obmerguis was not but was by the market when the incident happened. She left off the two after the ruling and died her. *Cielo Bonita, Inquirer Visayas*

NPA leader arrested

TAGUDAN CITY—Army soldiers arrested a suspected leader of the New People's Army in Tagudan, Ilocos.

Capt. Elario Jose Dizon, of the provincial office station officer 6th Infantry Division based in Cabugbugan City, Samar, identified the suspect as Rolando Galvante.

Galvante and his group allegedly stormed the police station of Cabugbugan in March 2005.

Soldiers arrested Galvante at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday in an abandoned house in Barangay Lipata, 4 kilometers from Poblacion town. *Joey Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas*

Vice mayor shot dead

DASMARIÑAS CITY—The outgoing vice mayor of this city in Cavite province was killed while his driver was wounded when shots were fired at their car in Dasmariñas City, police said.

Vice Mayor Benedicto Ilustrisimo was shot at close range by the gunman who alighted from a motorcycle and fired at the vehicle while waiting for a traffic light at the intersection of the regional road in Barangay San Antonio de Padua at 12:30 p.m.

Ilustrisimo, who was 58 years old, died at 4 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Hospital in Dasmariñas City. *Edwin Gadiano, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

California mayor awarded

DASMARIÑAS CITY—Mayor Jose Ederese of Milpitas City in California is outstanding Pangasinan who were honored June 29 for his big friendly relationships with his hometown.

Ederese, a native of this city, immigrated to the United States in 1981 where he worked for an engineer. He was first elected mayor of Milpitas in November 2002 and made Justice November 2006.

Free legal service lacks manpower

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE Public Attorney's Office, the government's frontline agency in providing free legal services to poor Filipinos, is plagued with lawyers in Central Luzon and swamped with 4,0 cases as of May.

The cases overload, measuring at an average of a month, continue to expand and to miserably implement Republic Act 9406, according to Salvador Mapalo, regional public attorney.

Signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo on March 25, RA 9406 reorganizes the DOJ as an independent and executive office attached to the Department of Justice for purpose of policy and program coordination.

It also ensures a grant of specific functions to the chief, deputy chief, regional, provincial, city and municipal public attorneys and other PAO lawyers. The grant shall "not exceed 100 per cent of the basic salary of the PAO officials and lawyers."

It also authorized government lawyers to "extend financial and other support to the PAO in terms of honoraria, free office space, equipment, furniture, stationery, and manpower as the PAO."

The Department of Budget and Management and PAO were given 90 days to issue the law's implementing rules and regulations.

Employment option

Mapalo said the special allowances and support would make working at the PAO an attractive employment option to new lawyers.

Most lawyers find private practice to be more lucrative, it was learned.

Public attorneys I get a monthly basic pay of P20,000 while those ranked II get a little over P21,000.

They are banned from doing private practice in their respective PAO offices in the regions even as they are allowed to practice their profession.

Only a few lawyers have applied for public attorneys. Many have preferred to apply as clerks of court, a post where the salary is higher and the benefits bigger, he said.

The PAO extends legal help to clients from low-income families. Cases are taken depending on their merits. Mapalo said. Most of the cases are criminal suits.

Since PAO lawyers are prohibited to receive fees from the clients, the government pays them a transportation allowance ranging from P6,000 to P9,000 a month. *Teresita Crespin, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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GMA to seal oil exploration venture ...

Front page 4

Palace Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the decision to tap the West African nation was also meant to forge a possible joint venture between Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. and its Equatorial Guinea counterpart.

"This is very significant economically, especially that Equatorial Guinea is a major producer of oil, even bigger than Brunei so far as oil production is concerned," Bunye said.

Bunye said Equatorial Guinea had contracted offshore oil reserves of 1.28 billion barrels. According to him, the African nation lacked technical expertise to offshore drilling which the Philippines could provide.

The press secretary did not provide further details on the proposed joint venture.

Mr Arroyo is also expected to tour the Cenpeo silica Oil (Gas) Complex and meet with the 2,500 overseas Filipino workers there.

"This will be a good occasion to visit them and ensure that they are treated well by their employers," the said in her departure statement.

Mr Arroyo will be the first Philippine leader to visit the former Spanish colony that has become one of the key oil producers that includes Nigeria, the world's sixth largest exporter, Angola and Gabon.

ABMIE oil and gas company last week announced that it had chosen and up to 600 million barrels of oil on the Etet Cape Three Points block off Ghana's coast in Point Africa.

In nearby Benin, drilling is soon to begin in the 470-kilometer coastal sedimentary basin that runs from Ghana to Nigeria.

European, American, Australian, Russian and Chinese investors have shown keen interest in the development of the oil industry in West African despite the fact the region represents less than a third of the total African production. Africa accounts for less than 23 percent of world production, far behind the Middle East, Russia and Brazil.

Despite the oil riches, an overwhelming majority of their people live in dire poverty and earn less than a dollar a day. Critics say the oil riches are enjoyed only by those in power and their associates. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, AP and AFP

Blair called 'the great convert' in Rome

Front page A1

Cherie, is a lifelong and practicing Catholic, and is considered with church aides since their days in Oxford, where they brought up Catholics and were sent to Catholic schools," The Guardian newspaper reported June 22.

His spiritual awakening goes back at least 30 years, to his time as an undergraduate at Oxford, but due to political sensitivities over his conversion to Catholicism has been a long time coming.

The Guardian reported that more than 10 years ago, Blair was slapped into Westminster Cathedral and invested in religious instruction, until the late Cardinal Basil Hume told him to stop because it was causing comment as he was not a Catholic—an impression that lingered him at the time.

Communion from John Paul

Blair is believed to have taken communion from the late Pope John Paul II during a visit to the Vatican in 2003, although the Vatican has never confirmed this.

In an interview with the austere British publication in Saturday, Blair indicated his conversion may not be just around the corner.

Asked if he would convert, Blair said: "I don't want to talk about it. It's difficult with some of these things. People will say it's just as president in three months' time."

The Guardian suggested that Blair may have been reluctant to convert during his years in office for fear of a potential conflict with his role in supervising legislation on religion.

He may have also been wary of doing so while playing a key mediating role in the Northern Ireland peace process between the province's Catholic and Protestant communities.

The newspaper cited informed sources on Friday as saying Blair had flown personal the conversion by a friend in Rome chaplain who had told private Mass for his family for the last four years.

Filipino bishop

A Filipino Catholic Church leader welcomed reports that Blair would soon be converting to the faith, setting the occasion to invite Filipinos to ponder whether their own beloved public had broken its ill-fate "friend."

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Church history had shown that "adult conversion," like the one being undertaken by the one of the most powerful men in the world "is always a very sincere and fine judgment compared to being Catholics by birth."

"Needless to say, this is something much appreciated to be heard that the Catholic Church is the true deposit of the Gospel truths," Cruz said, in interview with the business in Manila.

Message to Filipinos

This conversion of a non-vocal government leader sends the message to Catholics in the Philippines that, "more than broad causes, what is really important is the reality behind the word," he said.

"It's not a word," Cruz noted, "that we have a good number of local and national leaders who bear the brand 'Catholic' but in reality they can be anything but true catholic to Catholic faith and morals."

"It is not a question of being called a Catholic but rather the necessity of living the faith," he added.

Cruz said there were countries led by non-Catholic leaders "known for their outward honesty and sincere religious ... and there are five these countries do not get down such as "First Places in Government Corruption."

The archbishop pointed out that Filipinos were governed, from the hamstrung level to the national government, by politicians 90 percent of whom are Catholic.

Farewell tour

On the final leg of his farewell world tour, Blair spoke privately with Pope Benedict for 20 minutes in the Pontiff's study.

The talks were then enlarged to include Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, head of England's Roman Catholics. Earlier briefing the media spectacular about Blair's conversion.

A Vatican statement made no reference to the issue of possible conversion of Blair.

Cherie accompanied Blair to the Vatican and was introduced to the Pope with the British duke, the husband of the private talks. As is the custom for the Pope's female visitors, she wore a black dress and a black veil.

The Pope and Blair discussed the international situation, Europe and the Middle East, the statement said. The statement reiterated Blair's intention to work for Middle East peace and issues religious dialogue after he steps down.

Lunch at Catholic college

After his visit to the Vatican, Blair had lunch at the British Catholic College in Rome, the first British government leader to do so.

Despite such speculation about his religious beliefs, Blair has rarely commented on the issue, with his press spokesperson Alistair Campbell once telling reporters "We don't do God."

The Daily Telegraph, quoting Church sources and friends of the prime minister, said on Friday that Blair may announce his conversion soon after meeting the Pope, while also noting that his views on abortion, stem cell research and other moral issues are at odds with mainstream Catholic teachings.

The Vatican also opposed the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq to which London was Washington's main ally. With reports from Rudy Gutierrez and AFP

Mike A at 61: '20 lb lighter, 10 years younger'

Front page A1

family dinner for her husband's birthday.

Since he was discharged on May 1 from St. Luke's Medical Center, where he underwent an angioplasty, doctors has not been seen in public. He has not appeared in any public event of the President, including the Independence Day on President's second batch of medical scholars at Bicutan Hall in Malacañang.

Close to full recovery

"He looks very good. He's totally recovered now. He is OK, he looks 20 years younger," Duque said in a phone interview.

Though he had not examined him, Duque said Arroyo "looks done to being fully recovered."

"He was working, he finished the many things that he was to do," he said.

Soliman denied that Arroyo's recovery had delayed. She said the First Gentleman had been going to his office in Malacañang at least three times a week.

During the affair at Heroes Hall, Soliman said the executive director of the Philippine General Hospital, Dr. Gerardo Arbon, described the President's husband as "fine and healthy."

"He is 20 pounds lighter and 10 years younger," Soliman quoted Dr. Abo as saying.

Hospital visits

Arroyo goes done a week to St. Luke's for cardiac rehabilitation. Doctors have advised him to avoid all stressful activities, especially in the first three months of recovery to avoid the occasion of an aneurysm or heart attack.

Arroyo was barred from exercising, playing golf and was asked to follow a strict low-fat, low-salt diet.

A preview of the video recording of the testimony of the second batch of 56 scholars of the PC-Foundation showed Arroyo looking much better than when he was discharged from the hospital.

Advance celebration

Wearing a blue Barong Tagalog, the President's husband walked unaided to the stage to deliver brief remarks. He went around the hall to shake hands with his guests and posed for pictures with the beneficiaries of his scholarship program.

In his remarks, Arroyo said he would finance the schooling of doctors and help them patriot their specializations after he get a term from 6 to 10.

"This is indeed a very good advanced celebration for me," he said. "As you know, I'm still recuperating from a life-threatening operation and I'm thankful to God that I were through, that I survived through, that's only a very small percentage that anyhow and I'm really now is making miracle."

Only 15 percent of those who have his condition survive, he said.

'Bagong Kapanyalitan'

"And that's why I will concentrate to follow up on my medical programs because God gave me extra lease on life," Arroyo said.

Soliman said that apart from his other programs, the PC-Foundation has established a corporation for poor students taking up medicine at the University of the Philippines and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

Last year, there were 56 medical scholars. The second batch of 56 scholars was supervised by Tondo's Soliman said the foundation had a new program dubbed 'Bagong Kapanyalitan,' which supports the specialization studies of doctors who could serve in rural areas.

Arroyo said he wanted to help doctors pursue their specialization areas since his operation.

An 18-member medical team, which included Dr. Lulu's top specialists, led by Dr. Orestes Abbo, operation and monitoring heart surgeon Dr. Rommel Cortina and attending physician Dr. Ariel Cayanong.

"It's a true field on are founding, this Bayanihan (program). Maybe that is an offshoot of my operation. Ever since my operation, I have been looking for specialists who are someone their education and further help the people," he said.

'Pinay MD'

Addressing Grupo, Arroyo said his scholarship program was meant to complement the Department of Health's "Doctor Ko," a cohesive of the "Doctors to the Barrios" program which centers on the training of the underprivileged to become of getting elected.

"It's very important for us to serve our people," he told the scholars.

"We will take care of your whole life, your allowance, for three years, you don't have to do anything except just you have to serve our people for two years. That's all we ask—that you serve like our Ambulayans," he said.

Wife sues Iggy over depletion of ₱127M in assets

Front page A1

In her petition, Abdi Arroyo requested for immediate dissolution of the property and distribution of their property.

She said that during their marriage, she and Iggy Arroyo acquired real and personal properties, the majority of which were registered, managed and controlled by Iggy.

She listed the assets they owned as of 2005. These houses in Los Baños, Laguna; two properties in La Paz, Quezon City (she said that the second property—an 8,000-square meter lot—was bought by Iggy in connection with the former being registered only the house of the First Couple's two sons, Mikey and Jose Arroyo); two condominium units in Mandaluyong, Taguig and Subic; and two vehicles, a Mercedes-Benz and a Honda Civic.

Asked to comment by Inquirer Harper, Congressman Arroyo said it was dull, and he, who had "sold off" their conjugal assets.

"She is the one who depleted our resources," he said, adding that he had sold their shares of stock and "added" their joint accounts in the Philippines and the United States.

The congressman said he was named the respondent. He said he was planning to file one himself but that she had beaten him to it.

"I am glad she filed it," he said, adding that he would also seek the dissolution of a petition for annulment of their marriage.

4 farms, etc.

Abdi Arroyo said that while it was not indicated in the inventory list, she had been informed that he had "acquired four farms for Susan Roces [Iggy's mother] in Mexico, Pampanga, building condo units in metropolitan and Subic."

She said she had also been informed that the boundary properties acquired other assets, including a house in San Juan City a flat in Canada, two condominium units in Metro Manila, a property in Boracay and another condominium unit in Boston, Massachusetts.

Moreover, these properties were not declared by the respondent in his SAL (Statement of Assets and Liabilities) 2005", she added in her petition.

She added that Congressman Arroyo had been buying and selling real property abroad without declaring that he was married. "Clearly in keep [them] transactions hidden" from the public.

Abdi also said she and her husband had acquired shares of stock in seven companies. She enumerated the assets vehicles, jewelry, paintings and antiques they supposedly owned, including as much as seven accounts of which she said she was a signatory to only two.

In one year

In his 2006 SAL, Congressman Arroyo declared under oath that the absolute community of property had a total net worth of P107,092,470 (US$ 2,000,000). However, the following year he SAL showed that he had only P900,128,703.18 worth of property.

"This means that in a period of only one year, respondent managed to amass a total net worth of P127,036,232.82 in addition to those belonging to the absolute community of property amounting to P126,864,299.35," she said.

Quoting Article 130 of the Family Code, which considers as conjugal partnership of gains the separation of the properties by his or her spouse and the separation of the spouses for at least one year, Abdi asked the court to dissolve their property.

"Essentially, such assets of the absolute community of property that were surreptitiously disposed of by respondent without the consent of petitioner should be charged to respondent's share upon the dissolution," she said.

Abdi likewise asked for an accounting and inventory of the conjugal property before its dissolution.

She said the accounting was "essential" since she had been informed that the boundary "purchased various houses, vehicles and jewelry for his mistresses."

The accounting to be rendered by the respondent would "hopefully help in the correction of the exact value of the absolute community of property, the respective shares of the petitioner and respondent in the cases, and the amount to be charged to the share of respondent," she said.

Lastly, Abdi asked the court to require Congressman Arroyo to provide support in the amount of P600,000 while the suit was in progress.

Petitioner also was enumerated as respondent to become a full time housewife, was unlikely left to shoulder at least P600,000 in monthly expenses to cover household bills, utilities, food, salaries of household staff, their children's tuition fees, medical and credit card charges," she said.

Abdi also asked the court to appoint a receiver during the assets of the litigation, or appoint her as the sole administrator of the absolute community of property while it had not yet been dissolved.

She said the assets would prevent the further dissipation of the property.

In Abdi's claim that he was acquiring property for his "mistress," Congressman Arroyo said the should show proof.

Bittersweet

In a press conference at his lawyer's office in Poig City, Abdi Arroyo said the past three days had been bittersweet—on Sunday, she was told the SAL and other documents belonging to the absolute community of property amounting to P126,864,299.35," she said.

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Quoting Article 130 of the Family Code, which considers as conjugal partnership of gains the separation of the properties by his or her spouse and the separation of the spouses for at least one year, Abdi asked the court to dissolve their property.

"Essentially, such assets of the absolute community of property that were surreptitiously disposed of by respondent without the consent of petitioner should be charged to respondent's share upon the dissolution," she said.

Abdi likewise asked for an accounting and inventory of the conjugal property before its dissolution.

She said the accounting was "essential" since she had been informed that the boundary "purchased various houses, vehicles and jewelry for his mistresses."

The accounting to be rendered by the respondent would "hopefully help in the correction of the exact value of the absolute community of property, the respective shares of the petitioner and respondent in the cases, and the amount to be charged to the share of respondent," she said.

Lastly, Abdi asked the court to require Congressman Arroyo to provide support in the amount of P600,000 while the suit was in progress.

Petitioner also was enumerated as respondent to become a full time housewife, was unlikely left to shoulder at least P600,000 in monthly expenses to cover household bills, utilities, food, salaries of household staff, their children's tuition fees, medical and credit card charges," she said.

Abdi also asked the court to appoint a receiver during the assets of the litigation, or appoint her as the sole administrator of the absolute community of property while it had not yet been dissolved.

She said the assets would prevent the further dissipation of the property.

In Abdi's claim that he was acquiring property for his "mistress," Congressman Arroyo said the should show proof.

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SMART LIFE

Aplus METRO
Editor Boots G. Chipeco

Garci tapes expert dies in car mishap

Controversial engineer claimed recorded conversations tampered with

By Jeannette I. Andrade

JONATHAN TIONGCO, THE DIGITAL AUDIO ENgineer who examined the "Hello Garci" tapes and claimed that these had been tampered with, was killed in a car accident last Saturday.

Based on a police traffic report, the incident happened at 3:30 a.m. in front of the Commission on Audit office on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

Tiongco, 36, was driving his car, a Toyota Avanza with license plate EOE 490, on his way to interview from Tandang Sora when he slammed into an empty dump truck parked by the side of the road. He sustained serious injuries while his vehicle was heavily damaged.

The driver of a taxi cab passing by the accident spot is the Rai Kinston University Hospital. Tiongco died that night.

His body was brought yesterday to the St. Peter's Chapel on Quezon Avenue where the wake would be held. No date has been set for his burial. According to officials of St. Peter's, Tiongco's family had asked Dencio to bar media men from attending the wake and to ban the use of cell phones in the viewing room.

Tiongco became controversial in 2005 when then Environment Secretary Michael Defensor presented him as an audio expert who he hired to examine the "Hello Garci" tapes.

In a press conference, Tiongco said that his analysis showed that the tapes had been tampered with.

The tapes supposedly contain recorded phone conversations between Commission on Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo about rigging her victory in the 2004 presidential election.

A year earlier, sometime around February 2006 he was with Tiongco, he was at a hotel, he had been passing himself off as a paralegal expert and offering assistance to relatives of supposed kidnappers who had been killed or jailed.

Tiongco subsequently presented several relatives of suspected kidnappers who accused them before Secretary Angelo Reyes, who also headed the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, of murdering the kidnappings.

In August 2005, Tiongco filed charges against Senators Panfilo Lacson, Jinggoy Estrada, then Congressmen Francis Escudero and Gilbert Remulla, among others, in the Department of Justice.

He accused them of planning to overthrow the Arroyo government. The complaint, however, was rejected by the DOJ.

Passenger abandons sacks of explosives materials in taxi cab

By Nancy Carvajal

NINE SACKS OF AMMONIUM nitrate, an ingredient used in making explosives, were left behind in a taxi cab by a man last Monday in Quezon City.

City police chief, Supt. Rik Reyes, said a police patrol car happened to pass by the taxi, driven by Alfredo Lamos, 38, a resident of Barangay Jesus, Malabon City, at around 5 p.m. on Governor Pascual.

When he spotted the police vehicle, the taxi passenger, an unidentified man, got out of the vehicle and ran away, leaving the nine sacks of ammonium nitrate behind.

Reyes said the driver told the police that the man whom he called "Larry" flagged him down in Malabon City and asked that he be brought to Quiapo, Quezon City.

The driver added that he did not know that the sacks contained ammonium nitrate. Larry reportedly told him that the sacks were full of fish food.

The police later released the driver after being convinced that he did not have anything to do with the sacks of explosive materials.

According to Reyes, they were now monitoring certain areas to determine if there were warehouses for ammonium nitrate in the city.

The ingredient is one of the precursors in the manufacture of dynamites also used in illegal fishing. Navotas loses the biggest fish port in the country and is a major supplier of fish in Luzon.

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10 QC cops charged for failing to take witness stand

By Marjoue C. Ortiz

TEN HOME POLICEMEN were charged by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) for supposedly ignoring their court duties leading to the dismissal of drug cases and the release of suspected illegal drugs peddlers.

Of the 10, PO2 Victor Aquino, PO1 Zaldy Acosta, PO2 Noe Saul, PO2 Reynaldo Labios, and PO1 Rodelio Mendoza had been charged earlier this month by the PDEA for violations of Sections 91 and 92 of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

The PDEA also filed the same charges against SPO2 Rolito Cruz, PO2 Orlando Ocampo, PO3 Arnold Rosales, PO3 Windsock Jones, and PO3 Cirso Mandagan.

All of the accused are assigned at the Quezon City Police District in Camp Karingal.

In his complaint filed in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Monday afternoon, Senior Asst. Quezon, chief of the PDEA prosecution and case monitoring division, said the agency established a National Drug Case Monitoring System that supervises the status of drug cases and the performance of government prosecutors in court.

"Since the establishment of the system, we have been receiving copies of decisions from various courts and prosecution offices," Dato-Arao said.

"Upon studying the documents, the PDEA found out that most of the cases were dismissed due to the incompetency of police witnesses," he added.

Quezonian said the accused police officers were involved in the arrest of drug suspects in Quezon City. The suspects were subsequently charged in the city's regional trial courts. The PDEA lawyer explained that being present lawyers and apprehending officers during the buy-bust operation, the presence and testimonies of the policemen were material and essential for the successful prosecution of the accused.

The police officers, however, failed to appear during the scheduled hearings of their respective cases, prompting the judge to use them to explain why they should not be dealt for contempt.

The judges assigned court officials to search other detainees at the cases against the drug suspects "for you are of the installed characters of the prosecution's witnesses elsewhere."

"The dismissal caused by the police's indifferent transgression was the main reason the accused's cases and a serious blow to the government's drive to eradicate and punish to the fullest extent violations of the dangerous drugs law," Quezonian said.

Brownout in North Metro fouls up traffic, railway operations

By Rica T. Dizhonoko and Abigail L. Ho

SEVERAL AREAS IN METRO Manila and in nearby provinces experienced brownouts yesterday when lightning struck the 230-kilovolt (kV) San Jose-Balintawak line of the National Transmission Corp., cutting the power supply from two transmission facilities.

In a statement, Transco said the tripping of the San Jose-Balintawak line also caused the Hermosa-Mexico and Calumpit-Meycauayan lines to trip.

The tripping of the lines later affected the power supply generated by the Ilijan gas-fired, Cebu-coal-fired, Malaya thermal and Limay combined-cycle power plants operated by the National Power Corp.

Brownouts were felt at around 2 p.m. in parts of Cavite, Las Piñas and Bataan as Laguna, Batangas and Tarlac, Quezon.

Customers of the Manila Electric Co. in the northern part of Metro Manila, including Quezon City, Novaliches, Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela were also affected.

Transco was able to restore power to the San Jose-Bal, Hermosa-Mexico and Calumpit-Meycauayan lines at around 5:30 p.m.

Some 45,000 customers of the Light Rail Transit Lines 1 and 2 and Metro Rail Transit were stranded for over an hour as the trains stopped operating due to the lack of power supply.

LRT Authority public relations officer Jacky Pengco said in a text message that Line 1, which runs from Monumento to Baclaran and vice versa, resumed normal operations at around 2:50 p.m. Line 2, from Recto to Santolan, on the other hand, started operating at around 3 p.m.

The MRT, meanwhile, was not affected. Operations from the North Avenue station to Ayala Boulevard were stalled for a full hour. But operations from there to Taft Avenue were unaffected throughout the power outage.

MRT general manager Roberto Lastimoso said it was fortunate that the disruption of operations did not serve during rush hour.

The LRT Line 1 carries 39,000 to 45,000 passengers hourly at peak hours compared to 10,000 to 15,000 passengers for Line 2 and 40,000 passengers for the MRT.

DID YOU KNOW

TOXIC emissions worsen heatwaves, as Mike Mariano, assemblyman for 2000 Games of Population and Housing, for more 100 females in the region. Here are only 29 males. In 1980, the ratio was 95 males to 100 women. Mike Mariano has a life expectancy of 83.8 individuals, as of 2000. *Cynthia Anchetta-Jayme Rosario*

METROBRIEFS

Trike drivers on strike

HUNDREDS of tricycle drivers held a rally yesterday, disrupting traffic in Marikina. Drivers Pro Private Rights, in front of the Manila Police District headquarters in Ermita. The demonstrators, members of different tricycle drivers and operators groups in the city, claimed that Marikina police officers were not following money from them recently. The officers later agreed to end their protest following a dialogue with Senior Supt. Omar Aznar, MPD-TEU chief. The city agreed to look into their allegations.

Tina C. Santos

Lawyer airs side

THE NUMBER lawyer of Carol Gonzales, the estranged wife of politician Christopher Congressman Mark Jimenez, yesterday denied that she abandoned her client in the middle of the legal battles. Lorna Kapunan said she resigned that the "separation of trust" between her and her former client, who is now under the custody of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Custodial Center in Camp Crame, Quezon City. She added that she withdrew as Gonzales's attorney as her client's children are now reaching her legal efforts, noting that the decision was reached amicably.

Kathleen C. Alave

Waterless Wednesday

SOME areas of Manila will have no water for 48 hours starting today, from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. Thursday, as Rail will have no water on those days, according to Maynilad. The areas affected are: Block M-F Avenue, R.R. Lacson and G. Tuazon streets in Sampaloc, Manila, including Barangays 627, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, and 643. Areas that will have no pressure in its wake, include Alvarez, and those bounded by Magsaysay, Pablo Lumbatan and M. Fluvierose streets in Sampaloc, Manila, including Barangays 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, and 643.

2 Americans found guilty of illegal recruitment get life terms

By Julie M. Aurelio

TWO AMERICANS WERE convicted by his conglomerate by a Pasay City court after they were found guilty of large-scale illegal recruitment yesterday.

Judge Philemona Jorge Pinpin of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 111 meted out the punishment to Charles "Chuck" Greene and Bill Mosier who were also convicted for 11 counts of estafa. Judge Lyzaga-Jordan, Pinpin specifically pointed to Greene, whom she said deceived the 11 complainants when he promised them work overseas.

The complainants made the complaints release their resources in paying the processing fee and commitment bond required in exchange for the promised job, "the judge said.

Court records showed that in July 2001, 33 victims came forward to charge Greene and Mosier with illegal recruitment and estafa.

The complainants said they were induced to apply for an overseas job through Greene's Bona Foreign Investors' Coordinator and Management Inc., located in the Tenders Hotel in Pasay City.

The recruitment agency promised them a six-month job contract in the US as nurses, physical therapists, teachers, information technologists and pharmacists.

But before an applicant's papers could be processed, Greene allegedly demanded a processing fee of $1,000 and a commitment bond of $500.

The applicants waited for several months, only to find out that the screened were not licensed recruiters.

After several years, some of the complainants lost interest in pursuing the case against the two Americans.

Apart from the prison term, Pinpin also ordered Greene and his partner to pay a fine of $1,000.

Greene was likewise required to pay $27,000 each to Lilia Ibañez, Ely Rubine Rodrigo, Emma Ang, Cecilia Sanchez, Joselito Asuncio, Rachel Bryan, Ma. Clemente Esquivel, Rosajael Gonzales, Lucia Palencia, Ramon Arbo and Rosario Gonzales.

'Toxic residues safe after spill'

By Kathleen L. Alave

PEOPLE LIVING NEAR THE SPILL JUMP Shop in Barangay Cubogon, Pasig City have nothing to fear from the toxic residues of Marcopper mine spilled in the nearby river basin which flows into the region's biggest lake, the head of the city's environment and natural resources office said yesterday.

Raquel Santiagonzo, Pasig City environment chief, declared the neighborhood safe after the operations were tested for chlorine residue in the ground on Monday afternoon to determine if there was a need to evacuate residents near the junk shop.

City Gov. Robert Jaworski Jr. and Vice Mayor Ace Barbers also ordered the junk shop at 8 Mercedes Ave. after a gas leak containing chlorine leaked and caused its employees to suffer breathing problems. Seven were rushed to the hospital for dizziness, nausea and difficulty in breathing.

"Chlorine level in the ground is 0.1 ppm (parts per billion), which is within the standard as measured by special meters and if the ppm is more than one out of 100 ppm. The gas-operation, however, will be suspended because of the lack of environmental safeguards and negligence," Santiagonzo said.

'OPLAN ALAGA' FOR INQUIRER NEWSBOYS

The INQUIRER recently held the Boys' Harvest Festival at Rizal Park to honor 139 newsboy carriers from Magsaysay, Manila. The Inquirer's advocacy partners are Unilab Laboratories (Unilab) which donated medicines worth P138,000 and doctors who offered their services for free. From top (left to right) Jhong Ying, Inquirer business development officer; Doctors Victor Lingat, Philip Cuenco, Manuel Medina, Ma. Medina, Alex Flores, Mark Manansala and Glen Gopez, Inquirer BOO; Front from left: Dennis Luang, Inquirer product manager; Joe Cuevas, INQUIRER Boys coordinator; Edwin Sarmiento, Inquirer area manager and Mike Duna, JPI coordinator and Unilab representatives.

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INQUIRER

Thaksin won't return to Thailand to face charges

THAKSIN AP

BANGKOK, THAILAND (AP) — Ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra won't return to the country in June unless charges that he misused public funds are dropped before a Friday deadline set by police to face charges that he misused public funds, a spokesman for Thailand's anti-graft agency said Tuesday.

"He will not return to answer the charges because of safety concerns and other reasons," Noppadol Pattama, Thaksin's lawyer and ex-Cabinet spokesperson in Thailand, said the Associated Press.

If Thaksin fails to show up, Thailand will seek to extradite him, said Sutasi Maisomsiddhi, director-general of the Department of Special Investigation.

Thaksin and his wife, Pojaman, have been charged with violating regulations requiring disclosure of corporate information to the Stock Exchange of Thailand. AP

Israel to free 250 prisoners

CAIRO, EGYPT (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said on Monday he was ready to free about 250 Palestinian prisoners as a goodwill gesture to help President Mahmoud Abbas and his Israeli backers.

The two leaders held talks in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, their first meeting since Islamist militants militants seized the Gaza Strip nearly two weeks ago and left Abbas and his secular forces holding the larger West Bank.

Olmert told a joint news conference with Mubarak, Egyptian and Jordanian leaders he would soon notify "moderate" like Abbas against "terrorists"—a clear reference to Hamas militants—in order to ease peace in the Middle East.

"I look to Prime Minister Olmert to start serious political negotiations, according to an agreed timeframe, with the aim of setting up an independent Palestinian state. We hand is stretched out to the Israeli people," said Abbas.

Olmert said he was willing to convene a US-sponsored program of two weekly talks to push forward with efforts to found a Palestinian state, despite Hamas' control of Gaza.

"I'm optimistic that, especially in these turbulent days, an opportunity has been created to seriously move forward with the regional peace process. I shall plan to do this opportunity-shaping," said Olmert.

"At a gesture of goodwill toward the Palestinians, I today announced my intention to release (about) 250 prisoners who are members of Fatah rather do not have blood on their hands, with their commitment not to murder themselves again in terror." Olmert said Israel would make good on pledges, issued after Abbas climbed Hamas, to end economic sanctions and hand over hundreds of millions of dollars in Palestinian tax revenues as well as to ease travel restrictions to the occupied West Bank.

Abbas accused Hamas on Monday of staging a "bloody coup" in Gaza that had deeply wounded the Palestinian people.

Hamas has accused Abbas of a "coup" by dismissing the Hamas-led Palestinian government that held power before the Gaza takeover and of giving in to "Zionist blackmail." The Arab leaders at the meeting asked Olmert to act upon promises to take steps to make life easier for Palestinians and also to start political negotiations on a final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Abbas' short-term demands included an end to all attacks on Israel, settlement in Palestinian territory and on the wall or fence that Israel is building through the West Bank.

Israel should also release prisoners, remove checkpoints and transfer frozen tax revenues to the Palestinians, he said.

Hamas, excluded from the meeting because the participants recognize only Abbas, said the leaders were chasing a mirage.

"[The summit] did not give our people anything new except some talk about some money which was stolen from us," said Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri.

Earlier on Monday, Hamas militants in Gaza posted an audio tape of a captive Israeli soldier on the Internet. Sergeant Gilad Shalit was heard asking for medical treatment and urging Israel to free Palestinian prisoners.

A spokesperson for the Hamas militants said it was up to Israel to make a deal to free Shalit, a 20-year-old conscript. Reuters

Baghdad hotel bombed

BAGHDAD—A STEALTHY SUICIDE BOMBER slipped into a busy Baghdad hotel Monday and blew himself up in the midst of a gathering of IIS-allied tribal sheiks, killing at least four, police said, in a blow to efforts to forge a front against the extremists of al-Qaeda in Iraq.

The explosion exploded, devastating the ground-floor lobby of the high-rise Mansour Hotel, also killed at least nine other people and wounded 27, police said. Iraq's prime minister quickly assured renewed support to tribal province's tribal leaders.

"We are sure that this crime will not weaken the will of tribal sheikhs," Nouri al-Maliki said in a statement.

The stunning terror strike in the heart of Baghdad, by a killer penetrating layers of security, was one of a wave of suicide and other bombings Monday that killed at least 46 people across Iraq.

The bombing at the Mansour Hotel, on the west bank of the Tigris River in central Baghdad, struck as the lobby bustled with members of news media organizations, headquartered at the hotel and other guests, witnesses said.

Among them were a group of sheiks associated with the Anbar Salvation Council, an alliance of Sunni Muslim tribes that has turned against the al-Qaeda in Iraq extremists in a bid to drive them from the western province of Anbar.

Also entering the lobby was a man who—in carry officials later determined—was wearing traditional Arab garb, complete with headdress like the sheikhs'. He also was wearing a belt of explosives packed with nails and metal pellets, and three officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, the approached the sheiks and detonated his bomb.

A police officer based at the hotel identified four tribal leaders killed as former governor Gaud al-Bolani, chief of the Albu Nimr tribe, and a Mansour Hotel resident. Sheik Abdul Sattar al-Rishawi of the Fehad tribe; and Sheik Tariq Sideh al-Nasseh and Col. Fadil al-Nimrawi, both of the Albu Nimr tribe. Three of al-Gaoud's guards also were killed, the police officer said.

Another police official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said six of the executive sheiks were killed.

Gen. Anis al-Rawdi, a Defense Ministry adviser, also died in the hotel attack, a ministry official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Bird flu kills birds in Germany

HAMBURG—Six dead wild birds have tested positive in Germany for a lethal strain of bird flu, but authorities said on Monday they did not expect the disease to spread outside the northern region where it was discovered over the weekend. On Sunday, three wild birds found dead in Sassenberg in the southwest state of Bavaria tested positive for the deadly strain of the virus. The number of cases has since risen to six, with two swans and one goose infected, the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute, a veterinary institution, said. Authorities continued to investigate the outbreak, the first in Germany. They said wild birds discovered as part of a national testing program for bird flu in... Reuters

7 dead from Russian mine blast

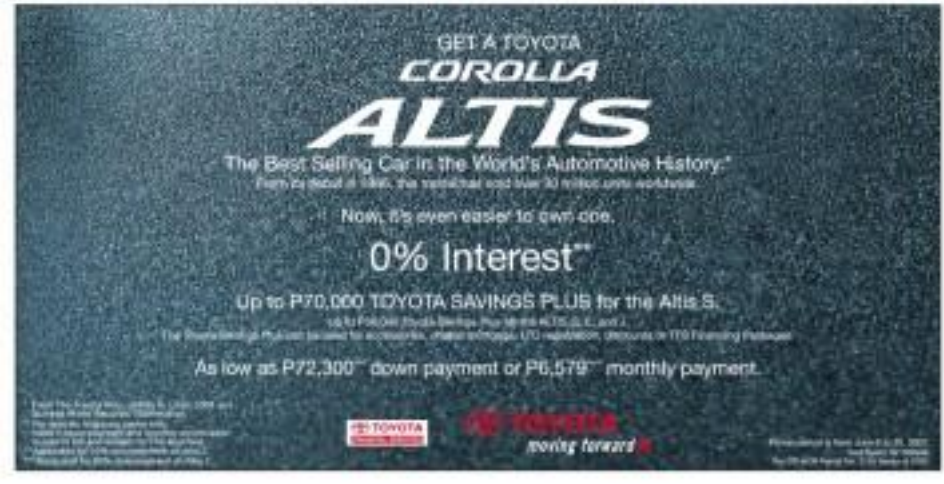
MOSCOW—An explosion at a coal mine in Russia's Far East killed seven people and left three missing, the Emergency Situations Ministry said Tuesday. The blast hit the Komsomolskaya mine in Primorye, about 2,000 km southeast of Moscow, on Monday morning. There were 213 people in the mine at the time. The ministry said in a statement. Most were able to reach the surface without injury, but four were hospitalized with injuries of varying severity, the statement said. The ministry said the explosion apparently was due to methane, but it was not clear what ignited the gas. AP

Egypt jails engineer for spying

CAIRO—Egypt's state security court sentenced an Islamist engineer to 15 years in jail Monday for collecting nuclear secrets for Israel's Mossad spy agency in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy in the second case of espionage to emerge from Sayed Salim. 26, who was arrested after he allegedly stayed the year had pleaded not guilty to the charges but was given the harshest sentence possible under Egyptian law, according to his lawyer. Mossad spy

Heat wave kills 3 in Greece

ATHENS—A heat wave pushed temperatures as high as 43 degrees Celsius in parts of Greece on Monday, contributing to the deaths of three elderly people and causing more electricity consumption and forest fires, authorities said. Temperatures reached 46 degrees Celsius Sunday and were expected to remain high for a second week, reaching 43 degrees Celsius in Athens. The Health Ministry said three pensioners, aged 75, 84 and 103, died on Monday, of medical conditions aggravated by heat strokes in central and southern Greece. AP



The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casino

Zoellick is new World Bank president

ZOELLICK

WASHINGTON—THE WORLD BANK ON MONDAY approved Robert Zoellick as its next president as the 185-country development lender moved to distance itself from a scandal that cost it credibility around the world.

Zoellick, 52, who is a vice chair at investment bank Goldman Sachs, is to take office Sunday. A well-known economic hawks, he faces the task of rebuilding trust in the development lender that crashed under current president Paul Wolfowitz.

Wolfowitz was forced to resign following a troubled two-year tenure after the bank's staff he had violated rules in arranging a lavish pay and promotion package for his female companion, a bank employee, He stepped down earlier this.

Zoellick, a former deputy secretary of state and US trade representative in the administration of US President George W. Bush, was nominated by Bush on May 30 to succeed Wolfowitz, an ex-US deputy defense secretary and an architect of the Iraq war.

"Dear I meet at the World Bank, I will be eager to meet the people who drive the speech of overcoming poverty to all in places, with particular attention to Africa, advancing sound and economic development, investing in growth, and encouraging helps, opportunity and dignity," Zoellick said in a statement.

Zoellick was unanimously approved for a five-year term at the 11th president of the bank, the 24-member executive board said in a statement.

Under an unwritten agreement, the United States chooses the head of the World Bank and European countries select the leader of its sister institution, the International Monetary Fund.

Bush welcomed the announcement.

"Bob Zoellick is a dynamic leader who is deeply committed to the mission of the World Bank to helping struggling nations de-

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CHECK OUT THE WINDOWS VISTA PACKAGES AVAILABLE AT THE FOLLOWING ACCREDITED STORES NATIONWIDE:

Microsoft

PARIS Hilton walks out of the Angeles County Sheriff Department's Century Regional Detention Facility in Lynwood, California, with her lawyer, Richard Hutton (right), on June 26.

Paris Hilton leaves jail

LOS ANGELES—HOTEL HEIRESS PARIS Hilton, who commanded so much attention behind bars as she left for Hollywood just to stay, regained her freedom on Tuesday after serving three weeks in jail for violating probation on a drunk driving case.

The incarceration of the 26-year-old multimillionaire, who hampered her own interest as a clothing line maker and star of the TV show "The Simple Life," ignited a worldwide media frenzy and debate about celebrity justice.

The saga has a crescendo when Hilton was placed briefly under house arrest after just three days in jail, sparking an uproar over what many saw as preferential treatment. Even so, a Los Angeles Times analysis found her sentence far exceeded those served by most inmates for similar offenses.

In the end, Hilton served 22 days in detention, crediting her for four home confinement. The original 45-day term set by the judge was offset only cut in half under a weekend credit applied for good behavior.

Hilton emerged from the Century Regional Detention Facility in suburban Lynwood at about 12:20 a.m., greeted by throngs of photographers and television cameras.

Dressed casually in dark slacks and a short-sleeved top, Hilton made no statement but had a broad smile as she walked down a paparazzi-lined cauldron a sports utility vehicle where she was confronted by her mother Kathy.

The Hilton left quickly headed for the family home in the exclusive enclave of Bel-Air, with several vehicles full of photographers taking them all the way.

Hilton was scheduled to give her first post-jail television interview on Wednesday on CBS's "Larry King Live" show, after ABC and NBC last week dropped competing offers to grant her a major broadcast network exclusive.

The case also led to a rare public showdown between two of Los Angeles' top law enforcement officers—City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, who prosecuted Hilton, and Sheriff Lee Baca, who oversees the county jail system and moved to "manage" Hilton to house arrest. Reuters

22 feared killed in Cambodia crash

SAMBOT, CAMBODIA—MORE THAN 1,000 rescuers on Tuesday scoured dense forests in southern Cambodia for a downed tourist plane believed to have crashed the day before, but heavy rains hindered the search.

All 22 people on the aircraft—13 South Koreans, three Czechs, a Russian pilot and five local crew—traveling from the Angkor temple town of Siem Reap to the seaside resort of Sihanoukville were feared dead, officials said.

"I hope there are some survivors, but nobody is sure," said South Korean Ambassador Shin Hyun-suk, before joining other Korean diplomats and Cambodian officials at a meeting called to map out how best to reach the crash site.

"The time is after [to] be fatal," he said.

The Russian-made AN-24, which disappeared from radar about 40 minutes after leaving Siem Reap early Monday, is thought to have crashed in a mountainous area in Kampot province about 50 km from its destination. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Tigresses gain first finals slot /A28

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Melendrez Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Dilloo

■ Top seeds get acts going at Wimbledon/A30

Pals eye 3-1 edge; Beermen seek tie

DARLENE TORRES Antonio Tolentino
4:36 p.m.—Stuffed to 7th 9-Out
1:05 p.m.—Antipuesto to stance

DERRICK PUMARES AND TIM Cone share something in common—2-1 leads over opponents from in-the-outgoing Talk 'N' Text–PBA Fiesta Cup semifinals.

And the other defense record they celebrate like so forgot—leads over the last to lose 2-1 leads in a best-of-seven series in the league.

Pumares and Cone try to redeem themselves this time when Talk 'N' Text and Alaska face for 3-1 leads—and move within a win of a title showdown—at the renaissance today of the Final Four at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Aces will try to bounce back from a 68-81 beating when they tangle with the San Miguel Beermen in the 7:20 p.m. contest, while the Phone Pals shoot for a third straight win against Red Bull earlier at 4:30.

Pumares had a similar 2-1 lead in the Philippine Cup semifinals this season, two-time champion Ronnie Magsanoc was then manager against Alaska then-coach Tim Cone.

Cone, on the other hand, had a 2-1 and 3-1 advantage over Purefoods in the same tournament, but the Hotdog Angat Ginebra were on to advance against the Gin Kings in the sixth series after winning the last three games of their playoff.

Defending champion Red Bull has played before par in the last six quarters of their series, dropping Game 5 after a lackluster second half and trailing by as many as 20 points in the third game on Sunday.

Red is a complete reversal of form for Red Bull, which jumped with so much class and assured in the series opener that it looked like the rest of the series would be an uphill climb for the Phone Pals.

"There's still no sense for celebration," Pumares said Sunday night. "Their thrilled remains a tough team and they are capable of bouncing back."

Cone also has repeatedly hoped that San Miguel won't give up just like that even when the hero had won the first two games.

"We have to come out with the same attitude that we've showed in the first two games and avoid getting this Miguel (the reliever we had) up-stream," he said. "We have to stay focused for that upstream."

His stance when league the Aces cleaned in Game 3, the Beermen managed to prevail and now has the momentum going for the equalizer.

"It is not so good so," said San Miguel coach Jun Tanquingcen, who has seen his magic on this team which started in the tournament with a franchise-worst 0-6 start.

Guiler Young will again lead the Beermen, while Rondi Tiby will spearhead the Aces, who aim to host for title-or-tie in five years after dominating the 1990s with 10 championships.

Attorney B. Castillo

Pacman gets ESPN nomination

MANNY PACQUIAO WAS NOMINATED BY sports network giant ESPN for Star Fighter in its annual ESPY awards.

The Filipino ring icons earned the nod of the cable TV and Internet giant after stopping seven foes Erik Morales late last year and even Hollywood this year.

Crowding him for the award are fellow boxers Miguel Cotto, the PBA's multi-weight champion, and Floyd Mayweather, who defeated Oscar De La Hoya in a bitterly fought match this year.

Also nominated were mixed-martial fighting championship stars Randy Couture and Quinton Jackson.

Golfer Tiger Woods, tennis star Roger Federer and basketball booster LeBron James lead the male athletes of the year award, while golfer Lorena Ochoa topples the Female Athlete of the Year award.

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Perfect 10 on imperfect scoreboard

By Jasmine W. Paya

COMPATRIOTS INITIALLY MARRED THE defining moment of her athletic career.

Nelle Cruzaldo, the first gymnast to earn a perfect 10 in the Olympics, couldn't understand why a "9.99" flashed in the scoreboard after her routine in the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

"When they put up 9.99, which is not a very good score in gymnastics, I remember the moment I was confused," recalled Cruzaldo. "I remember I asked my teammates why I got that score. Somebody mentioned that it's not a 10. They just couldn't put it up on the scoreboard because there's no space."

COMMERCIAL

Cruzaldo, who still looks stunning at 45, got the full explanation just two months ago during an awards event where she met the president of the scoreboard manufacturer of the 1976 Olympics.

"He told me that when he was creating the scoreboard, he asked the international gymnastics federation if it's possible for somebody to score a perfect 10," said Cruzaldo.

"Since they're creating the scoreboard, they needed to know how many numbers were needed. And the gymnastics federation said that somebody is going to score a perfect 10. So when they created a scoreboard, the highest score was 9.99. So when the 10 was to be put up on the scoreboard, they couldn't do it."

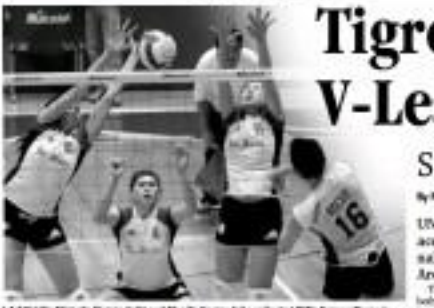
The moment remained fresh to the Batanguena gymnast, who is in the Philippines for the first time to give a motivational talk together with legendary Filipino hurdler Lydia Dejesus-Nicolas before empress Vilma Palma-Gonzalez.

Cruzaldo's now no special formula for a successful career highlighted by seven perfect 10s during her 1976 Montreal Olympic romp.

"I don't think it's a secret," she said. "The most important thing is to love what you do. I know that's kind of a big cliché. But I think it's important to try to be better everyday and remember all the time why you're doing this. And of course, work hard."

Representative, who joined Cruzaldo in yesterday's press conference at the Bulwa Country Club in Alabang, shared a similar advice to Filipino athletes.

"Keep on trying, never give up," the six-time world bowling champion said. "Disasters come your way, go work hard. Believe in yourself and be disciplined. Never be afraid of changes and master the fundamentals."


LA SALLE's Michelle Datoin (left) and Manila Santos fall a spike by UST's Suzanne Roces in their game yesterday. With them is La Salle's Genevieve Arnaiz. ALEXIS SILA-STAFF

Tigresses enter V-League finals

SSC, La Salle alive

By Ramona S. Acosta

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS NEEDED TO accomplish two things to make the finals—beat La Salle and not allow the Lady Archers to score more than 53 points.

The Tigresses did both yesterday, downing the defending champions Lady Archers, 25-14, 25-27, 25-17, 25-21 and 25-23. Their total score to just 53 points at The Arena in San Juan City.

Santo Tomasinas Clinched
12-0 — 12 SSPK to 0 for Adamson

UST then clinched the first finals ticket of the Shakey's V-League season's women's volleyball tournament by virtue of a better quotient than San Sebastian College which topped Group A in the first round, 20-24, 25-16, 25-23.

UST and SSC sealed the carry-over semifinal berths at 4-0 apiece but the Tigresses registered a high- or twice-but points into, 1-146 to the Lady Stags' 1-146.

Lorelei Sowael set of the finals race after a 5-0 start, winning just one of his next seven matches for an overall 7-6 record.

Ara Sebastian and La Salle will dispute the second finals berth in encounter at 5 p.m. The loser plays Letrans for third place.

It will be La Salle's second knock-out game after bowing Adamson on June 13 for the fifth and last semis seat, 19-25, 16-25, 25-22, 26-24, 15-6.

La Salle finished the season at 6-5 but edged Letrans for the playoff slot three victories out of four semi games, an incentive given to inspire the lower-ranked squads at the end of the eliminations to cop all-out wins.

UST beat La Salle for the 15th in the inaugural season but bowed to the Lady Archers in the first and second eliminations of 2006. La Salle also lost to Letrans in Group cruise last year over San Sebastian.

Ms. Angel Tabaquero, Shey Jean Salse and 2006 UAAP Most Valuable Player Nene Bunda, all National players, had 13 attack points each as a combined output of 44 points.

Only guest Thai player Sasorsong Arsenal scored in double figures for La Salle, clubbing 13.

The four-of-three championship begins Sunday, July 1.

Stags seek lead vs Bombers

SAN SEBASTIAN scrimpers to make it two in a row when it takes on opposing city foes Jose Rizal over on St. Benilde debuts against Mapua today at the resumption of the NCAA boys's basketball tournament at the Arena in San Juan.

Final drama 59-56 victory featuring the Stags hopes to continue to the side for the 4-year game against the Cheese Bombers, who are trying to recover from a 91-89 whipping from the defending champion Emeldo Lores.

The Blazers got to show what they can do when they collide against the Cardinals in the opening game at 2 p.m.

Mapua clinched a close 84-80 loss from letmen after Saturday.

Now handled by Chalmers Cortes coach Jorge Gilbert, San Sebastian provided over Perpetual by outmanning the full weight of its tall lineup made up of 6-foot-9 Francis de Leon, 6-5 Jimmy Alapag and 6-4 Gilbert Malabanan and Omar Mbaye.

Lebanese and speed, however, will be the main weapons of Jose Rizal, which is eyeing to bounce back after getting shellacked by tournament favorite Letran.

Three-year veterans James Sena (5-6) and sophomores Alvin Ira (5-4), Jeanie Nacum (5-4) and Jerome Ramos (5-3) are expected to lead the Jose Rizal Bombers, winner last title more 30 years ago.

"We have to catch up," said JRU coach Boet Sinigauduka "But the season is still long. The loss against San Beda is just one game."

Despite its edge in height, St. Benilde faces hot to prove this season, especially after missing the Final Four the past four times.

The 2006 champion Blazers finished dead last last year, losing 10 straight games along the way to wind up with a 2-11 record.

Christian Cabatu (6-5) will spearhead the Blazers' offensive drive.

Smart/Petron RP jins to train, vie in Korea

THE SMART/PETRON RAYMEN of taekwondo stars has stepped up its preparations for three big international events by undergoing medical examinations in Philippine schools and participating in the Chuncheon Open championships from June 28 to July 1.

"We've dead set in making a good impression in the Olympic qualifying in London, the Asian selection in Vietnam and the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand," said Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert Aventajado. "Our Korean training camp is going to be a big help."

Twenty-two athletes will train in the best Korean schools and gymnasiums such as the Korea National Sports University and Pung Sung School to develop strong spirit and sharpen their skills, and at the same time, vie in the Chuncheon Open.

"This is a timely move (by PSBC)," said delegation head Stephen Fernandez and coaches Roberto Cruz and Raul Isaacson of the training and participation in the Chuncheon joust.

The athletes are:

Men—John Paul Lizardo, Arthur Figueroa, Tibonilai Go, Manuel Sirvent, Jose Carlos Padilla V, Ernesto Juan Mendoza III, Alexander Briones, Michael Alejandrino, Rolly de Jesus, Rolly Joel Conrad and Michael Angelo Rosillon.

Women—Kathleen Esmee Alora, Leanne Lucelle Catalan, Gabriela Jo Gimbulan, Kirsty Elaine Aisna, Rafhelle Dimalan, Jacy Antoinette Flores, Ma. Criselda Reyes, Veronica Domingo, Gwendalyn Anastacio, Esther Marie Simpson and Katherine Ann Ramos.

The Chuncheon competition will serve as a tuneup for the Filipinos as they bid for Olympic slots and medals in the Thailand SEAG.

Anton Peruo, Philippine Sports Commission and Association officials leading the taekwondo team's trip.

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Take 3: PBA, Rudy Salud, an agri activist

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

[illegible] Hotshots [illegible]

IN FORMATION: The scorekeeper did not shout up Saturday, but there was lawyer-sportsman Rudy Salud (also worst out of his way to report and announce on the world debut of Manny Pacquiao's career. In fact, Salud put on the working glass and read to us—clearly and slowly—over the phone the statement of Ring referee Nigel Collins who somewhat dominated Filipino fans who have started to become critical of Pacquiao. Collins declared as Pacquiao poorly as a sports was Gramercy Salud: "But we look at Manny with all the values that we want popular Filipinos to live by and become role models for our youth." Touche... from national swimming association president Mark Joseph on April as Manny Pacquiao's father received a postcard-mail from the Nuche-Joseph family: "Hope we are activist and counselor he was brave and stood with us through dark times because we both started the same thing: good government. He used to ask me for old cookies on several dishes that I had received for Christmas from congressmen and others. I always wondered what he was doing with them. We just put them aside in a closet somewhere ending up forgotten. I found out he was rewarding them as gifts to people he came in contact with daily—a policeman, a teacher, a maid, a nurse or doctor. He gave them to public servants. Somehow, he knew that these would help them do their jobs better. Senate was persistent and good-hearted. He cared, he went as he would some, he would have us to [illegible] and he never stopped doing good no matter how impossible or minuscule the task seemed. When he got the energy from he never seemed to have one or become cynical is a stunning one. I've said that he is gone. But he is more where he belongs. He is in the company of senior singers, where the good worries their reward, God-opened People."... Your reporter here has just been given orders to take his annual break. Sorry for the noise. Thank you for bearing up. Bye, peeps.

Cubans excel on $350-M sports budget

By Jam Manzano

CUBA SPENDS APPROXIMATELY $350 million annually for its athletes and this is the reason why it is a world power in sports.

"Sports in Cuba is deeply rooted in the very essence of the government," explained Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez yesterday. "After investing heavily on its athletes, Cuba's success rate is very impressive."

Cuba ranked 9th in the all-day line a terrifying sojourn in Havana, Cuba as part of the 50 delegates composed of government officials from the various arts and athletics, culture and sports sectors.

The PSC top honcho—and Cuban sports authorities flaunt majority of the $350 million budget to boxing, volleyball, baseball and beach volleyball, where Cubans are heavies worldwide.

Cuba is a powerhouse in Olympic boxing while its highly regarded baseball players are the jewels in the crown of American scouts in the US baseball major league.

In essence, Ramirez said the PSC gets a yearly budget of P500 million, approximately P90 million from the General Appropriations Act and P20 million a month from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation.

The budget that the CAN is currently spent for the operations of the PSC while the funding from the Philsports is channeled directly to the Philsport Sports Development Fund.

SPORTSWATCH

PCAP cockfest set today

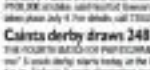
ANC 61 AND SPECIAL 4 COCKDERBY WILL BE PRESENTED BY THE INTL Sports and Amusement Corp. and Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines today at the Araneta Coliseum featuring more than 600 fights backed by 6-Way Derby and Sise Maisoko. Meanwhile, Jun Pascual will host a 6-cock derby on July 2. Call 426-PCAP (426-0227) for guaranteed prize 4 cocks for an entry fee of P12,000. The "Sagupaan Sa Sagbayan" 6-cock derby kicks off on July 23, 24, 30, 31 and Aug. 1. Participants may call 896-3041 and 896-4011 for reservations of accommodations.

SJC 'Rambulan' stakes P3 million

CLOSE TO P10 MILLION IN GUARANTEED PRIZE MONEY IS UP FOR GRABS IN the upcoming "Rambulan" 6-cock derby on July 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21 and 24 at San Juan Coliseum. Backed up by Gagayuan Complexes 2000, the event is an invitational derby. The "Rambulan" derby last summer attracted about 16 fans also. Host and SJC Jaime Rebello Pineda pegged the derby has an only P10,000 but SJC's Tested White Cock Stakes" series resumes at Friday, June 29 with P100,000 at stake, said Nestor Bravante. The "Fil Star Palite" 6-cock derby takes place July 4. For details, call 7350388 and 291-1509/3681.

Cainta derby draws 248 entries

THE FOURTH LEG OF PHILSPARMA'S IN THE BLOODLUSTER "TRIATRIO" 3-cock derby starts today at the Cainta Fair Center Coliseum starting at 1 p.m. Today's 2-cock elimination round will contain 16 fights, said host Thomas Lacuna. A total of 248 cocks and handlers from all over will participate. The championship round fires off on Friday, June 29. Meanwhile, CRCC also convenes its first "Step/Wars 4-step derby" on Aug. 31, 2007 and 23 with P500,000 as top prize. Call 8332258, 2482507 or 09189041911.



BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(2x5)10—Save the Queen (8), Color My World (2), Lady Ruby (4), Jukebox Legends (1).

Race 2—(Perlas)6-10—Alex Peace (Mel), Superstar (8), Island Lure (2), Mystery Style (1), All Set Girl (4), Speed Antonia (5).

Race 3—(Perlas)5-10—Fernando Jones (2), Gold Money (10), Sandpiper (5), Grand Value (1), Mahal Mali (3).

Race 4—(2x5)10—Macadamia (3), Red Heat (2), Ruby Ralph (7), Rose (10) Rachel (5).

Race 5—(Perlas)5-10—Friend Mine (8), Red Rocket (2), Perfect Wind (3), Extra Mile (1), Whole (9 (4x7).

Race 6—(2x5)10—Heart Dancing (7), Energy (9), Chime (1), Joint Account (2).

Race 7—(Perlas)5-10—Fantastic Way (1), Umbrella Dreams (6), Mahalimi (7), Hot Wings (4), Heart Of The Wind (10).

Race 8—(Super 6)5x7)10—Top 10 (Color (5), Mikaela Polly (8), Il Love (2), Whatever I Want (9), Red Beta (3), Dancing Star (1).

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 3.A. NUMBER 11 OF ORDINANCE 7755 (UNDER TRICYCLE TERMINALS) BY APPENDING THEREIN THE ADDITIONAL LOADING AND UNLOADING AREA OF TAYABAS TRICYCLE OPERATORS AND DRIVERS ASSOCIATION INC. (TATODAI) AND SECTION 3. NUMBER 25 OF ORDINANCE 7671, BY APPENDING THEREIN THE ADDITIONAL ROUTE LINE AND APPROVING THE NUMBER OF UNITS ALLOCATED FROM 40 UNITS TO 120 UNITS.

Be it ordained by the City Council of Manila, that:

SECTION 1. Section 3.a number 11 of Ordinance No. 7755 under Tricycle Terminals as amended by Ordinance 7626 by deleting letter b. of thereby amended by appending thereto another letter to be known as letter b. to be read as follows:

"Tayabas Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association (TATODAI)

a. Tayabas Street corner Rizal Avenue
b. Torres Street corner P. Huertas Street"

SEC. 2. Section 2 of Ordinance 7671, number 28 is hereby amended by appending hereto the additional route line and approved by appending the 8 M.C. allocated from 40 units to 120 units.

Association	Route	R.M.C.
Tayabas Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association, Inc.	Torres corner P. Huertas to Kalentong St.	120

SEC. 3. Effectivity Clause – This Ordinance shall take effect upon its approval.

Enacted by the City Council of Manila at its regular session today.

Approved by the Honorable Mayor, Jo

APPROVED:

JOSE L. ATIENZA, JR.
Mayor
City of Manila

DANILO B. LACUNA
Vice-Mayor and Presiding Officer
City Council, Manila

ATTESTED:

EMMANUEL O. USON
Secretary to the Mayor

ROSULO F. LAPID
Secretary to the City Council

PRINCIPAL AUTHOR: HON. EDWARD N. TAN
CO-AUTHOR: HON. ERNESTO G. DIONISIO, Deputy Floor Leader

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the City Council passed the publication of the above proposed Ordinance during its regular session held on June 19, 2007 pursuant to the provision of Section 17, Article III of R.A. 409, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Charter of the City of Manila.

(Sgd.) **ROSULO F. LAPID**
City Government Dept. Head III
(Secretary to the City Council)

TransCo
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Republic of the Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS AIRCRAFT PARTS AND SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS IN THE OVERHAUL OF HAPTSEL, PEOPLE LIFT, ASSEMBLY AND LANDING GEARS OF SUPER KING AIR 350
Bid No. TSD-07-06-07-0784-R

1. The [illegible] Corporation intends to apply the sum of [illegible] being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of Aircraft Parts. Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at the bid opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents during June 27, 2007 to July 13, 2007, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Seven Thousand Pesos (P 7,000.00) from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Ronnie Mel D. Perez, Procurement Section, 11th Level Main Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

3. The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid conference open to all interested parties on July 5, 2007, 2:00 pm at the BAC Office, Room 502, Ground Floor, Former UNEDC Building, 1124 Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

4. Deadline for the submission of Bids shall be on July 19, 2007, 2:00 pm at the BAC Office, Room 502, Ground Floor, former UNEDC Building, 1124 Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. Immediately after the deadline, BAC will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

5. The Bids and Awards Committee of the Commission on Audit reserves the right to reject any Bid, to cancel the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ARMANDO B. CARINO, JR.**
Assistant Commissioner
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid Procurement of Service Vehicles

1. The Commission on Audit intends to apply the sum of Seventeen Million Five Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Pesos (₱17,555,800.00) broken down as follows:

LOT NO.	QUANTITY	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ABC
1	Nine(9)	Asian utility Vehicle (AUV), 5-cylinder diesel engine, displacement 2,499cc to 2,500cc, manual transmission (MT), rear wheel drive, power steering, dual air conditioning system with independent rear/front controls, anti-lock braking system, front fog lamps, driver & front passenger airbags, complete with mudguards, standard tool kit, with safety warning device (CMVR), first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and seat belts. Delivery within 60 days upon receipt of Purchase Order. Quantity: 9 units each color. Color: White, Silver, Gray, Red, Blue, Black, Brown, Beige, Champagne, Maroon, Green, Yellow, Orange, Purple, Violet, Indigo, Pink, Gold, Bronze, Copper, Platinum, Ivory, Cream, Tan, Khaki, Navy Blue, Sky Blue, Turquoise, Teal, Olive, Lime, Peach, Coral, Salmon, Lavender, Magenta, Fuchsia, Amber, Ruby, Emerald, Sapphire, Topaz, Opal, Pearl, Onyx, Jade, Amethyst, Aquamarine, Citrine, Garnet, Tanzanite, Zircon, Moonstone, Sunstone, Labradorite, Obsidian, Malachite, Lapis Lazuli, Tiger's Eye, Rose Quartz, Hematite, Peridot, Alexandrite, Chrysoberyl, Spinel, Tourmaline, Kunzite, Iolite, Andalusite, Benitoite, Charoite, Diopside, Enstatite, Fluorite, Howlite, Jasper, Kyanite, Larimar, Magnesite, Nephrite, Prehnite, Rhodochrosite, Serpentine, Sodalite, Spodumene, Taaffeite, Unakite, Variscite, Wavellite, Willemite, Zoisite, Agate, Aventurine, Bloodstone, Carnelian, Chalcedony, Chrysoprase, Dumortierite, Flint, Heliotrope, Jasper, Kunzite, Moss Agate, Onyx, Petrified Wood, Prase, Sard, Sardonyx, Tiger's Eye, Turquoise, Variscite, Zebra Stone, Zircon, Agate, Amethyst, Aquamarine

SPORTS

Top seeds get acts going at Wimbledon

Federer, Henin trounce foes

JUSTINE Henin serves to Argentina's Jorgelina Cravero, during their women's singles, first round match. AP

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—REUTER Federer came some Centre Court at Wimbledon dressed like a player from a bygone era. He then played like his usual modern-day great self.

The top-ranked Swiss star began his bid for a Open-era record-equalling fifth consecutive Wimbledon title Monday by beating Tomasz Cadanbell of Russia, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4, on a cool and wet opening day at the All England Club.

Other winners included third-seeded Andy Roddick and home-crowd favorite Tim Henman, who said she has been receiving treatment for a previously undisclosed hamstring problem.

It was Federer's 49th consecutive grass-court victory and 20th straight at Wimbledon, a streak dating back to 2003. With no major victories since the same time months, he would become the first player to win five straight championships since Bjorn Borg in 1976-80.

"It was OK," Federer said. "I was pretty pleased with my performance. It was pretty solid. He played a decent match, so I had to come up with some decent shots once in a while."

The man Federer has beaten in two finals, third-seeded Andy Roddick, also got off to a strong start, beating fellow American Justin Gimelstob, 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (5), on Court 1. Roddick served 16 aces, broke three times and never lost serve. Gimelstob is 0-9 for the year since returning from back surgery.

In women's play top-seeded Justine Henin from Argentine qualifier Jorgelina Cravero, 6-3, 6-0, to start her chase for a fifth Wimbledon title to complete a career Grand Slam. Henin-Hardenne avenged Pollmann, down 5-4 in the first set, seen eight straight games to defeat Lourdes Dominguez Lino of Spain, 6-4, 6-0.

Williams, who was far from her best in the first set, said she has been more "motivated by a right hamstring.

"It's doing OK. It's getting better, slowly but surely," she said. "I'm hoping and praying it will get better in time."

Former Wimbledon champion Martina Hingis overcame a big scare, seeing two match points in the second set against 18-year-old British solid rival Naomi Cavaday before taking nine straight games to win, 6-7 (11), 7-5, 6-0.

Among the seeded men who advanced were No. 5 Fernando Gonzalez, No. 13 Tommy Haas and No. 17 Lleyton Hewitt.

As is so often the case at Wimbledon, the biggest surprise in wet weather, with play getting under way after a rain delay of about 2 hours, 40 minutes, they was enjoyed later in the afternoon because of more rain, and a total of 30 matches were postponed.

In keeping with tradition, Federer was the first player to walk onto Centre Court as defending men's champion. He did it in style, savoring a soldier commercial all-navy-style jacket—similar to the award-colored model he donned last year—with a gold pants (before getting straight down to business—flexing a generic winner down the middle on the first point. He was never troubled by the 46th-ranked Gimelstob, who was making his Wimbledon debut and had won only one previous grass-court match.

Federer needed only 1½ hours to complete the victory, finishing with 33 winners and 13 unforced errors. He broke the Russian four times and saved the only break point against him. Other than that, only two other men have won at least five straight Wimbledon...Leander Dibbery (1900-001) and William Renshaw (1881-86)...

Federer's mother sat in the Royal Box, while his girlfriend, Mirka Vavrinec, was joined by Federer stalwart coaching star Yannick Rosset in his supporters section.

Federer came to Wimbledon without any grass-court match practice after losing to Rafael Nadal in the French Open final two weeks ago. He pulled out of his traditional warmup event in Halle, Germany, citing fatigue and soreness. AP

WWE superstar Benoit, family found dead

ATLANTA, GEORGIA—PRESS RELEASE, WRESTLER CHRIS BENOIT WIFE found dead Monday, along with his wife and young son of their Atlanta home, the World Wrestling Entertainment said on its web site. Law enforcement officials in Fayette County said Monday the dead included Benoit, his wife, Nancy, and their seven-year-old son, Daniel. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that police are investigating the case as a murder-suicide. No details were released but the results of autopsies are expected Tuesday. The 40-year-old Benoit was born in Montreal, Canada, and moved to Calgary in the 1980s where he got his start in professional wrestling. Benoit later wrestled professionally in Japan before joining the WWE in 2000. Benoit was scheduled to appear in a title match, but backed out because of a "family emergency," the WWE announced on Sunday. Benoit went by the ring name the "Canadian Crippler" and his signature moves included suplex, flying headbutt, the triple German suplex and the "Crippler Crossface."

AP

BENOIT

12-year-old is youngest US Open qualifier

LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA—AT 12 YEARS AND 360 DAYS OLD, AMERIcan Alexis Thompson on Thursday will become the youngest qualifier ever to compete at the women's US Open. Thompson will join the likes of Monica Seles (sixteen) and world number one Lorena Ochoa at the 2000 Open at Pine Needles Lodge and Country Club, which offers a total purse of $2.1 million. The 5-foot-2, 90-pound schoolgirl made it through a sectional tournament in Baltimore, Florida, to qualify for the major. "I've just met have playing golf," she told reporters on Monday. "It's great that I made it and I'm hoping to experience a lot of things." Thompson won the right to play the Open at the age of 12 years, four months and one day, beating the previous record set by the now 19-year-old Morgan Pressel by more than six months. Pressel has held this record since 2001. Thompson, who will compete as an amateur, is being accompanied by her parents.

Reuters

Lakers set to acquire Garnett

LOS ANGELES—OWNERS OF FIVE NBA Angeles Lakers and Minnesota Timberwolves have started talks about a possible four-team blockbuster deal that would send Kevin Garnett to the Lakers to play alongside Kobe Bryant, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday.

The newspaper, citing unnamed National Basketball Association sources, said the discussions involve Indiana as well while ESPN added to the mix, saying Boston would obtain Jermaine O'Neal from the Pacers as part of the mega-trade.

Under the plan, Garnett would go to the Lakers while the Pacers would get Lamar Odom and Andrew Bynum from the Lakers with young players and draft picks going to Minnesota.

The Times reported that Lakers owner Jerry Buss and Glen Taylor, owner of the Timberwolves, ended their 20-minute telephone call by saying their respective basketball executives should continue the talks.

The deal should make Bryant happy. The Lakers' superstar guard has expressed his unhappiness several times in the past month about the state of the Lakers and he has chosen to use the club trade rumors to become outspoken.

Obtaining Garnett, who has stayed with Minnesota despite frustrating years and an inability to play beyond the first round of the playoffs.

Garnett, 31, has watched the Timberwolves lose to the Lakers in the 2004 Western Conference finals and failed to qualify for the playoffs since then. They were 32-50 last season.

Garnett has one year on two of his contract at the same season, so the Timberwolves might want to obtain something in exchange for him rather than watch him depart for nothing in return.

He is due to make 22 million dollars next season and 22 million dollars in the 2008-2009 season.

Garnett averaged 22.4 points, 12.0 rebounds, 4.1 assists and 1.7 blocked shots a game last season.

AFP

Django cops 2nd straight crown in US

FLEURY PAUL MAITER FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante edged defending champion Thuy Chohan of the United States, 5-4, in their rematch in the finals to rule the Third Tilmo Summer Jamboree One Pocket 200-and- event Monday at the Hard Times Billiards in Sacramento, California.

This was the second straight title for the 44-year-old Bustamante after winning the 9-ball division of the third Tilmo Summer Jamboree last week.

Among Bustamante's victims in the One Pocket were Rafael Martinez, 5-1, Steve Smith, 5-0, Frank Beardemann, 5-1, Stan Wilkinson, 5-1, Daniel Gruss, 5-1, and Chohan, 5-2, for the ten-win tie.

Bustamante surpassed the record of competitor Dennis Orcollo, last year's champion in 9-ball, previous turned up to the One Pocket division.

Bustamante accumulated a total of 14 solid, seven wins coming from the 9-ball contest and six other wins wins from the One Pocket division.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

NEW CUB: In this undated photo released by Wieninger, golfer Tiger Woods (left) holds his newborn daughter Sam Alexis Woods as wife Elin kisses the baby on the head. Sam Alexis, the first child for Woods and his wife, was born June 18. AP

"I've been a comedian for a long time. I'm used to being the butt of jokes. But I can still be touchy about my appearance. When I started experiencing hairless people made jokes about it. I was even called Monsignor because my bald spot was increasing to the size of a Philippine's cup! I tried to not let it bother me but the truth was it did. Seemed with less hair you look older. And I'd rather be seen as classic, not old. I tried special shampoos and topical injections or lotions but with no success. Then I went to Svenson. After three visits I saw a big difference. Now, when people ask me, 'Is it a wig?' A transplant?' I say, 'No, it's my real natural hair.' It's Svenson!"

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Young lass bags Thai chess gold

By Yolanda Sotto-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO, BENGUET—A 7-YEAR-old girl from this agricultural town brought home to the country by winning a gold medal during a chess competition in Thailand last week.

Samantha Glo Bevits quietly slipped back into the country with her teammates on Saturday after the 16-day 6th Asean Age Group Championship.

Samantha won the gold in the Standard Class, the highlight of the competition, on June 20. She also bagged the bronze in the Blitz Class. The Philippine delegation brought home eight gold and three silver medals.

The Thailand tournament was the third Asean tour for Samantha. She joined the 9th Asean Age Group Open Championship in June last year in Indonesia where she bagged a silver medal and the 2nd Asian Schools Open. Waived in Dec. 2006 where she also won a silver.

The girl's father was ambushed by the fact that no official from the national government, even from the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP), welcomed them at the airport.

"We, there was nobody to welcome her and the Philippine delegation," said her father Sammy who accompanied her to the tournament.

He said the team arrived at the airport on Saturday dawn, took a cab to a hotel to rest, and returned to their town.

"We tried to arrange on our budget," said Sammy, an engineer employed by the Benguet State Electric.

The NCFP paid for Samantha's air fare and hotel accommodation, but Sammy said the latter spend for his team needs as for daughter's guardian.

He said he had to look for sponsors (the local government gave them P50,000) and seek out relatives as he could accompany Samantha to Thailand.

"We cannot express our happiness enough. We really need our love for Samantha to win the gold," he added.

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Imports fell 1.8% in April to $4.34B

Electronics shipments down 17.3%

By Philatelle V. Reroa

THE COUNTRY'S IMports dropped by 1.8 percent to $4.34 billion April from the same month last year, pulled down by the double-digit decline in demand by electronics firms, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The contraction in April was a turnaround from the 4-percent growth in March.

Electronics imports—made up largely of raw materials assembled in the Philippines to produce consumer electronic products for export—fell $1.05 billion, or 17.3 percent lower from a year ago. Finished and semi-processed electronics products are also in the country's top dollar-earners.

REPORT B3

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DOE pushes Napocor debt-for-grant swap /B2
Pre-need sales up as of April /B9

for those who like to stand out
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DOE pushes Napocor debt-for-grant swap

ABACUS

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

To all stockholders:

The annual stockholders' meeting of Abacus Consolidated Resources and Holdings, Inc. will be held on July 13, 2007, Thursday, 10:30 am at the Meeting Hall, Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila, with the following agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of minutes of previous stockholders' meeting
4. Report to the stockholders
5. Approval of audited financial statements as of December 31, 2006
6. Election of directors
7. Appointment of auditor
8. Appointment of transfer agent
9. Appointment of external auditors
10. Ratification of acts of directors and officers
11. Other matters
12. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record as of June 22, 2007 will be entitled to notice and to vote at the meeting.

If you cannot attend the meeting, you may send your duly accomplished proxy form to the Corporate Secretary at 6K Ilustrado St., New Manila, Quezon City, 1112, no later than July 6, 2007. Validation of proxies will take place on July 10, 2007 at the same address.

Registration for the meeting begins at 9:30 am. To facilitate registration, please bring a valid ID with your photograph and signature.

(Sgd.) LEONARDO D. SAN DIEGO
Corporate Secretary

By Abigail L. Ho

IN AN EFFORT TO ALLEVIATE the adverse effects of power generation on the environment, the Department of Energy has proposed that $3 billion of National Power Corp.'s loans be converted into grants that can be used in the establishment of renewable energy projects.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said that instead of having Napocor repay $3 billion worth of debts falling due over the next three years, creditors could choose to allow the government to use this amount for projects using renewable resources and clean technology.

"It is the case of Napocor. It owned some $6 billion. There is a way to mobilize that amount. Instead of repaying, we can address that debt overhang by mandating that amount for renewable and cleaner sources of energy," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Asia Clean Energy Forum yesterday.

But only would the country benefit from a cleaner environment and from ample power supply, but the "public service problem" in remote areas would also be addressed, he said.

He explained that it was difficult to tap renewable energy projects for rural communities as these were not really economical.

This was because renewable energy projects were site-specific, with many of the appropriate sites located in areas too far-flung to be reached by existing transmission lines, he said.

"So you have to build a transmission line for that, and that costs a lot of money. We've got to think of innovative financing mechanisms that will allow us to fund these things," he said.

Nonggang Zhai, principal renewable specialist for Southeast Asia at Napocor creditor Asian Development Bank, said a swap arrangement similar to what Lotilla was proposing was already in place in South Africa.

"In South Africa, there is a debt-to-infrastructure. This can be a scenario we can consider," he said in a separate interview.

For his part, AIM president Herdilito Ezeeda said the establishment lender, using its Clean Energy Facility, was exploring the possibility of allowing a "contingent loan on the success of [Napocor's] projects to think of innovative financing mechanisms that will allow us to fund these things," he said.

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"If the higher returns from the use of the cleaner energy technologies are not realized, the loan will be converted into a grant," he said in a speech. "Through this mechanism, ADB proposes to share the risk for the use of new technologies to encourage greater dedication."

Manufacturing output continued to shrink, posted 1.3% decline in April

By Michelle V. Remo

OUTPUT BY MANUFACTURING FIRMS, MEASURED IN terms of production volume, continued to fall in April in what are economists' view a result of lower demand both from the local and global markets.

The volume of production index (VoPI) shrank by 1.3 percent in April, although this was slower than the 8.8 percent contraction in March, the National Statistics Office said in its Monthly Integrated Survey of Selected Industries (Misi) released yesterday.

The VoPI had been on a decline since the start of the year, by 13.8 percent in February and the by 0.9 percent in January.

The consistent drop in manufacturing output previously raised confusion as the manufacturing sector had been credited as one of the strongest contributors to the country's economic growth in the first quarter.

But the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) had explained that the Misi included only "organized" manufacturing firms in its samples. "Organized" firms are those that are either registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and belonged to the manufacturing industry's trade associations.

On the other hand, the National Accounts, the basis for reporting economic growth, takes a wider sample for computing the performance of the manufacturing sector. The samples it uses also include "unorganized" industry members, or small-scale producers not registered with the SEC.

According to Benjamin Diokno, undersecretary professor in the University of the Philippines, the drop in production by firms covered by the Misi was due to weaker overall demand, both from foreign and domestic clients.

He said the drop in the March-April was significantly the drop in imports in the same month. Imports for the month fell 1.6 percent year-on-year to $6.34 billion. (See story on page B-2.)

Although the discrepancy between the Misi and the National Accounts was already expected by the NSCB, Diokno expressed doubts on the reliability of the National Accounts.

The government earlier reported in the biannual Report that the economy grew by 6.9 percent in the first quarter, the fastest in 17 years. The growth was partly anchored on improved production by the manufacturing sector, it reported.

Diokno said he expected a downward revision of the first-quarter economic growth in between 6.7 and 6.9 percent. This congruates into account the weakening performance of the manufacturing sector, he said.

The Misi also said that the sub-sectors that contributed to the drop in production volume were: Textiles (-16.2 percent); cellulose (-33.4 percent); footwear and wearing apparel (-32.5 percent); basic metals (-17.3 percent); chemical products (-3.6 percent); electrical machinery (-4.6 percent); and nonelectrical machinery (-27.4 percent).

The drop in production volume, however, was slightly offset by the higher output of the following sub-sectors: Transport equipment (14.6 percent); nonmetallic mineral products (10.6 percent); food, beverage and tobacco (10.3 percent); petroleum products (2.6 percent); beverage (5.8 percent); fabricated metal products (3.9 percent); publishing and printing (27.4 percent); food manufacturing (6.5 percent); paper and paper products (6.7 percent); and furniture and fixtures (2.6 percent).

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Rate of 3-year T-bonds rises to 6.435%

RATES ON TODAY'S PUBLIC TREASURY bond auction rose on the three-year treasury bonds higher, but the government faced with a tax collection shortfall, still decided to borrow at the higher cost to raise its financing requirements.

The three-year bonds, totaling P1.435 billion, fetched a 6.435 percent average rate, higher by 7.6 basis points from the 6.359 percent recorded in its previous auction in April. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, who also serves as officer in charge of the Bureau of the Treasury, said the higher rate sought by banks was reasonable and tolerable. He noted that the new yield for the three-year bonds was in line with secondary market rates.

"The new rate is very much within the market average of 6.4 percent. We [Treasury] are comfortable with the rates," Tan said in a press briefing after yesterday's auction.

Analysts said the increase in interest rate was not unexpected as demand for government securities in banks remain awash with cash. Volume of bids reached P16.35 billion, more than double the government's debt offering of only P6 billion.

The auction committee of the Treasury accepted the full amount of bids, seeking to fulfill the programmed borrowing yesterday.

Tan said there were P17.1 billion worth of retail treasury bonds that were about to mature this week.

He said the Treasury was studying whether or not it would issue new P1 floppy-rate money and compensate the cash outflow resulting from the payment of the maturing government securities.

In January to May, the Bureau of Internal Revenue collected P580.30 billion in taxes. This represented a P28.02 billion shortfall from the P514.28-billion goal set for the period.

With the BIR being the biggest source of revenue for the national government, the budget deficit hit P41.7% billion in the first five months of the year, breaching the P36.66-billion ceiling set for the period.

The government has set a target of limiting the deficit for the full year to only P82 billion, better than the P84.5 billion recorded last year.

Michelle V. Remo

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Coal mine, park get perks

By Rustel W. Dantingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS (BOI) granted incentives to a P307.2-million coal mining venture in Surigao del sur and a P331.2-million business park project in Columba for macro, small and medium enterprises.

BIG Mining & Energy Corp., which is based in Bislgao del Sur, is involved in the exploration and development of a coal mine capable of producing 331,000 metric tons a year.

MGMEC's project is expected to create 1,100 new jobs and at least 75 indirect jobs, mainly in marketing and administrative functions.

The company's coal properties include three main projects—one in Brgy. in Surigao... which is in the development stage—and two in Agusan, Cebu, and in Bagatna, South Cotabato—both in the appraisal stage.

MGMEC's project would cater to power producers and several manufacturers, including Paper Industries Corp. of the Philippines, Toledo Power Co., Davao Union, Bacnotan Power Corp., Iligan Power Corp., Alsons Cement, and Philippine National Oil Co.

Also, BOI approved perks for Filinvest Land Inc.'s business park facilities covering 30 hectares in Columba.

The 80MF business park is a pioneering property development project with 3,774 units.

Dubbed "Ayesco Village," the project would be similar to a cottage industry village where MSME owners and operators, their families and workers would live and work.

According to Filinvest, the business park—for new and existing entrepreneurs—would help MSMEs be competitive locally and globally.

The development of business parks is qualified for tax holidays and other fiscal and non-fiscal perks under the 2006 Investment Priorities Plan.

PhilHealth's financial health

THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE Corp. (PhilHealth) recently ran newspaper ads to prove its financial soundness. The ads ran several reports that a whopping P1 billion in fraudulent claims have ravaged PhilHealth over the past 12 years.

In 1995, Republic Act No. 7875 created the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP), designed to provide affordable, acceptable, available and accessible health care services to all Filipinos.

Under this insurance policy, the healthy helps pay for the care of the sick, and those who can afford medical care subsidize those who cannot.

The law also created PhilHealth to run the NHIP. To start, PhilHealth took over the so-called Medicare Program, started back in 1969 when the Social Security System (SSS) and the Government Insurance Service System (GSIS) ran parallel policies for the employed in the private and public sectors, respectively.

The sources of funds are practically inexhaustible. Congress appropriates every year 20 percent of the government tax revenue from excise taxes on cigar and cigarettes and the increase in documentary stamp taxes.

But, the biggest sources of funds are the members themselves, who contribute 2.5 percent of their salaries, shared equally by employers and employees.

I believe the ads that PhilHealth is financially sound, despite the report that it has paid out P1 billion in fraudulent claims in 12 years.

Let us take a look at those fraudulent claims.

Assuming a worst-case scenario, a member can claim P22,075 maximum.

This amount covers the ceiling of 30 days' confinement in a tertiary hospital, including surgeons, professional fees and surgical cases.

The P1 billion divided by P22,075 is 45,694. Spread out over 12 years, we come up with about 3,500 claims a year, almost 10 cases a day.

But the actual average claim is much less. Hospitals send patients home as fast as they can. The average confinement is probably no more than a week. When my patients are operated on, I stayed in the hospital for only five days.

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Horacio C. Geneval

My guess is that the average claim is P10,000. If the fraudulent claims total P1 billion, the more likely there were 100,000 claims over the past 12 years.

Nobody at PhilHealth got wise to what was going on? I cannot tell.

I cannot help but conclude that the P1 billion in fraudulent claims is a figment of someone's hectic imagination, to be cute about it.

Insurance companies all over the world have had to grapple with the problem of fraudulent claims.

Here, private life insurance companies have computerized early-warning systems for arresting spurious claims.

I know a company that detected fraud from one source after only six claims. The agent and the attending physician were cooked right away.

Surely, PhilHealth have had its share of fraudulent claims that passed through the mill and actually got paid. But the total is nowhere near P1 billion over 12 years.

It should not be too hard to build cases against the guilty ones. Fraudulent claims are always fully documented.

PhilHealth should throw the book at the guilty, recredit the of hospitals, clinics and doctors involved be withdrawn.

Any employee who is a party to fraud should be separated for cause.

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Electronics exports seen up in '07

Industry group expects trade to pick up after disappointing performance in April

ELECTRONICS EXPORTS CAN STILL BE saved by a targeted 10 percent in 2007 despite a disappointing performance in April and a drop in exports of parts, an industry group yesterday said.

Electronics made up over 50 percent of total Philippine exports, which has been one of the bright spots of the country's economy.

But electronics exports grew only 5.3 percent year on year in April after 7.3 percent expansion in March and exports of parts needed for finished products slipped.

According to figures announced released yesterday, exports of electronics parts plunged 17.3 percent in April from a year ago and were down 19.4 percent from March, signaling a weak export performance ahead.

Ernesto Santiago, executive director of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. (SEIPI), however said the figures could be distorted by the Easter holidays in April, when the country came to a standstill for almost an entire week.

"The global environment is conducive for us to grow this year," Santiago told Reuters, adding that exporters were generally optimistic about export revenues in the second quarter.

"But it has been inventory pick up, they are preparing for Q3, so Q2 is a 'lull-ish' quarter," he said.

Santiago said wireless applications, mobile phone, consumer products like LCDs and high-definition television sets and i-Pod would be the main drivers of growth for the electronics sector this year.

Last year, electronics export grew 11 percent, slightly higher than the industry's 10 percent projection. SEIPI projects a further 10 percent growth in exports in 2007.

Analysts said the import numbers were worrying because they arrived just as the peso was gaining strength.

"It does not augur well for electronics exports in coming months, given the 17.2 percent plunge in April's electronics imports in spite of the stronger peso," said Nicholas Lo, managing analyst with Informed Global Markets in Singapore.

The peso weakened after the data, falling as far as 46.23 against the US dollar compared to Monday's close at 46.07%, but the currency still remains more than 6 percent stronger than at the end of last year.

Yields on three-month government paper were quoted higher at 4.729 percent compared to 4.6769 percent previously. The stock market was flat at 3,607.12 points after the trade data.

Reuters

Easycall sells 2.25M shares in e-Performax

By Rico T. Diaforobo

SHARES FROM LEADER EASYCALL COM-munications Philippines Inc. will sell 90 percent of its stake in e-Performax Contact Center Corp. to Global eStation Solutions Inc. for P70 million.

Easycall yesterday told the Philippine Stock Exchange that it had already obtained its board's approval to sell 2.25 million of its shares in e-Performax.

Proceeds of the sale will be used to settle Easycall's labor and other legal claims, fines and penalties imposed by the National Telecommunications Commission, and advances from third parties—all amounting to about P80.4 million.

Selling off the stocks will pose a challenge for the company since e-Performax is a major contributor to its revenue.

In the first quarter of the year, EasyCall posted a consolidated net income growth of 117 percent based last year's P9.87 million.

"This growth was largely fueled by the increase in the company's equity as net earnings of a call-center associate, e-Performax Contact Center Corp. and, to a lesser extent, by the cost reconciliation measures, which streamlined operations for both the parent company and EasyCall e-Services Inc. (e-Invest), a wholly owned Internet services subsidiary," the company said in its disclosure.

During the first quarter, EasyCall's consolidated service revenues amounted to P9.81 million compared with P4.40 million in the same period last year.

The company said the 8-percent decline can be attributed to the reduction of dial-up Internet subscriptions as the Internet service provider industry moves toward broadband options.

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THE BRAIN

RP business group seeks wider trade with S. Africa

By Rommel W. Dominguez

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF Commerce and Industry announced that it had signed an agreement with its South African counterpart to increase trade and investment between the two countries.

PCCI president Sarree Lim said the group's partnership with the South African Chamber of Business, as well as agreements with the other South African chambers, would provide the groundwork for reducing many investment activities.

"We also agreed to reinvigorate the Philippine-South Africa Business Council," Lim said.

He added that the agreement would reinvigorate the moribund trade membership base of the PSABC, which was originally formed in 2004, to further develop trade between the Philippines and South Africa.

Lim cited South Africa's mining, furniture, tourism and pharmaceutical industries, as "joint ventures of collaboration."

Data from the Department of Trade and Industry show that merchandise exports to South Africa went up in 2006 by 45.4 percent to $5.1.08 million, or to 1.1 percent of the total outward shipments.

Major cargoes bound for South Africa included pharmaceutical products; petroleum products; processed dairy products and fresh eggs; juices, purees and concentrates; processed nuts and roasted products; semiconductor; electronic data processing and office equipment; and automotive parts.

Last year, the Philippines enjoyed a surplus in trade as its ports from South Africa were down by 26.5 percent to $57.86 million.

Major cargoes from South Africa included paper and paper products; animal feed stuff; cereals; base metal ores and concentrates; manufactured tobacco; semiconductors; automotive parts; iron and steel; and organic chemicals.

Imports fell 1.8% . . .

From page B1

The April figure brought the country's total imports for the first four months to $16.51 billion, still up 3.4 percent from the same period a year ago.

Both exports earlier reported to have reached $18.3 billion for the first four months of the year, the country's balance of trade (BOT) was only $1.8 billion during the period.

In the case of the Philippines, a deficit in the BOT is not a source for too much concern. Economists have noted that the country is almost 80 percent of imports comprised raw materials and intermediate goods. A rise in imports therefore indicates an expected increase in production and exports in the months ahead.

The weaker-than-expected growth in imports in the first four months raised doubts whether the country could still meet the government's official target of an 11 percent year-on-year exports growth for 2007.

But Ernesto Santiago, president of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines Inc. (Seipi), said the electronics sector was still bullish about earnings prospects for this year. The industry was still looking at a double-digit exports growth of 10 percent this year despite the imports slowdown. (See story on page B1.)

The other major imports for April after electronics were mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials ($930 million); industrial machinery and equipment ($1,087.7 million); transport equipment ($1,039.5 million); textiles, yarn, fabrics and related materials ($112.9 million); and iron and steel ($112.9 million); chemicals ($81.6 million); cereals and cereal preparation ($75.76 million); plastics ($73 million); and telecommunications equipment and electrical machinery ($69.32 million).

The biggest sources of imports for April was still the United States, which accounted for $638.87 million of the total for the month.

Other top import sources were Singapore ($530.6 million), Japan ($494.75 million), Saudi Arabia ($422.43 million), China ($397.36 million), Taiwan ($266.87 million), South Korea ($227.88 million), Hong Kong ($149.83 million), Thailand ($148.77 million) and Malaysia ($145.84 million).

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Shares close little changed

SHARE PRICE CLOSED LITTLE changed yesterday, with gains in blue chips offset by losses in the broader market in cautious trade, dealers said.

Buy and sorts recovered in the middle of the session after a week slid but gave up some gains later in the session.

The composite index edged up 1.54 points at 3,697.12 after moving between 3,690.12 and 3,698.78.

The broader all-share index rose 1.34 points to 2,301.39.

Losers beat gainers, 94 to 80 while 44 stocks ended flat. Volume totaled 5.4 billion shares worth 95.2 billion.

Conference are poised to take trade or investors chose to stay on the sidelines ahead of the Federal Reserve meeting this week, said Grace Gardiano of Philstocks.

"Given the slump in 20 housing loans, investors widely expect a reduction of interest rates but will played a safe," Gardiano said.

"The market was in a reflex mode as anything rising on investors were trying to pick stocks with enhancement leads to digest," said Lawrence de Leon of Apex Capital Equities.

But the market could rebound strongly later in the week as fund managers window-dress their stock portfolios when the first half of the year closes, said Jasper Arcenas of BDO Unibank Group.

The day's biggest decliners were banks including Metrobank Card Corp., which dropped P2.50 to P69 and Banco de Oro EPCI, which shed P2 to P68.50.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. or PLDT rebounded from Monday's drop, adding P30 to P2,070.

Jose Miguel saw its "A" shares rise by P1.50 to P76 while its "B" shares gained P2.50 to P81. AFP

Pacific Online tapped for new project of PCSO

LOTTERY EQUIPMENT PROVIDER PACIFIC Online Systems Corp. yesterday said it was going into the instant-ticket lottery market.

The government-run regulated instant ticket lottery is typically played by removing the coating of a pre-printed ticket to determine whether it contains the winning numbers. The value may cost P10 and the jackpot is worth P1 million, sources said.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, Pacific Online said it had been appointed by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) as the master distributor of a PCSO Scratch Card game project which it is slated to launch this July.

Pacific Online and Scientific Games Inc. will team up to assist PCSO in launching the PCSO Scratch Card Game Project known as the "Triple Cash" and "Money Bags."

Sources said that with these games, PCSO is expected to raise P8.00 million in sales in the new six months.

Still, Pacific Online's partner is into online lottery operations in Visayas-Mindanao, and the leading provider of instant lottery tickets in the world, that better supplies tickets and print the scratch tickets to be used for PCSO projects.

SGI has also agreed to provide technical consultancy in the marketing and distribution aspects of the project.

The instant games business is one of the fastest growing segments of the worldwide gaming industry today, and through this new investment, the company seeks to take advantage of this area of growth in the industry where it can win," Pacific Online said in the disclosure.

Elizabeth A. Lacson

Thrift banks' bad loans declining

But NPL ratio to total loans remained at 7.29% as lending also went down

By Michelle V. Rivera

THE MISLEADINGLY LOADED TOTAL loans ratio of the country's thrift banks in April remained at its previous month's level of 7.29 percent, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The BSP said the NPL ratio did not change because the deposit-competing banks were offset by the decline in the thrift banking sector's total loan portfolio.

The latest NPL ratio, however, was 17 percent lower than the 8.79 percent recorded in April last year.

NPL ratio measures the exposure of banks to overdue loans. It is determined by dividing NPLs to the total loan portfolio.

NPLs of thrift banks stood at P20,332.16 billion in April, down by 19 percent from P20.371 billion in March. Their total loan portfolio reached P278.878 billion, 11.5 percent lower than the P274.44 billion in the previous month.

The banking industry suffered from a high level of nonperforming loans, including NPLs, especially during the Asian financial crisis. The problem on the burgeoning bad assets in the late 1990s up to early 2000 was blamed for the banking sector's reluctance to lend more aggressively.

To help banks unload the bulk of their bad loans and restored assets, the Special Purpose Vehicle Law was put in place. The SPV Law, which was extended last month for another two years, provided tax discounts on the sale of NPLs and nonperforming assets to asset management companies.

The BSP said the current 80% ratio of the thrift banking industry was not much of a problem, as it was still a single-digit level. The sector's NPL ratio, excluding inter-bank lending, stood at 6.40 percent in April, lower than the previous month's 6.66 percent and years ago's 9.51 percent.

The BSP said the proportion of nonperforming assets to total loan portfolio stood at 2 percent in April from 1.99 percent in the previous month and 2.93 percent in April last year.

Nonperforming assets to total assets ratio rose to 10.76 percent in April from the 10.74 percent in March, but reflected an improvement from the 12.29 percent in April last year. Nonperforming assets refer to the sum of nonperforming loans, or those that have been foreclosed because of unpaid loans.

Also, the central bank said the NPL coverage ratio of thrift banks fell to 50.28 percent in April from 50.46 percent in March. This measures how much of the existing NPLs are covered by reserved funds.

Napocor revives dam operators group

By Abigail L. Hu

IN A BID TO ENHANCE THE operations of its hydropower facilities, state-run National Power Corp. has organized the multi-sectoral Philippine National Committee on Large Dams (PNCOLD), which is composed of large government and private dam operators.

"PNCOLD's mechanisms will provide a means for us large dam operators, both government and private, to share experiences to further improve our operations and maintenance to ensure public safety," the dam firm said in a statement.

The nonprofit organization is composed of government-owned Masinloc National Irrigation Administration and Mangagoy-on Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Private entities that are part of the organization include GE Caterpillar Water and Energy Co. Inc., Asia Hoppe Water Corp., and the Engineering and Development Corp. of the Philippines.

PNCOLD aims to enhance the knowledge of large dam operators regarding new trends and methods in the different stages of the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of large dams.

It also aims to gather relevant information, foster knowledge dam engineering practice and study-related questions, including those on the technical, economical, financial, environmental and social aspects of operating large dams.

Within the organization, members are expected to exchange information with each other, get new information from international organizations and institutions, hold meetings and technical conferences, as well as organize and coordinate studies with one another and also with non-member organizations.

DOT expects brisk hotel dev't to boost tourism

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM EXPECTS hotel development to be brisk in the coming years with at least two big-ticket hotel projects starting this year.

Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano said he met with Japanese businessmen Mitsuoo Ito Tokyo that Friday that he was expecting 3,000 additional hotel rooms to be made available this year in Cebu, Bohol, Boracay and Palawan. Of these, 1,000 will be in Cebu.

Data from the DOT website showed that as of September last year, there were 31,742 hotel rooms in the country, of which 19,9 accredited hotels accounted for 16,247.

The two major hotel projects cited by Durano were the P3 billion The Imperial Waterpark Resort and Spa in Mactan and the P1.5-billion Boracay Shangri-la Hotel and Resort.

The 600-room Imperial Waterpark, which is owned by a Korean group, hopes to bring state-of-the-art water park technology to the Philippines.

Boracay Shangri-la Hotel and Resort, which will open next year, will bring in additional 200 rooms.

Last year, the DOT approved P65.6 billion worth of investments in the hotel sub-sector versus Another P9.52 billion worth of such projects were approved in the first quarter of the year.

One of the DOT's programs is to promote the Philippines to Japanese travel agents through business missions, a series of plenary presentations, sidebar discussions and individual meetings organized in Japan's three largest cities, Osaka, Nagoya and Tokyo.

"Growth in foreign arrivals is highly dependent on the pace of capacity expansion. Our target of 5 million visitors by 2010 is a challenging five-point objectives is continuously given the sector to ensure tourism development is a long-term program. Thailand took 20 to 25 years to get to where they are," Durano added.

Another project expected to boost tourism in the Philippines is mall tycoon Henry Sy's mass-service tourism center in Batangas called Batulao-Tagaytay.

SM Investments Corp. (SMIC), Sy's holding company for his banking, leisure, retail investments, earlier was pouring P5 to P6 billion over the next five years to pursue the first phase of its vision 3,000 hectare Batulao-Tagaytay resort community in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Durano also noted that a new convention center would rise at the corner of Makati Avenue and P. Burgos. The 42,000 square meter (SM) convention Center will be accessible to a new hotel in the SM Bay City to be developed by Century Pacific Asia Pacific.

Century will develop and manage a 200-room property in Bay City.

Century Pacific includes Pepsi Koala in Resorts, Radisson Hotels and Resorts and Park Plaza Hotels & Resorts.

Ayala Land Inc. said it was building a 300-room Fairmont Hotel, a 30-suite Raffles hotel and a 160 Raffles-branded private residences in Makati in a partnership with Dubai's leading hotel and resort developer, Kingdom Hotel Investments.

The Hotel Jen Group had also announced plans to construct the country's tallest building, which will house a five-star hotel, in Fort Bonifacio Global City, Durano said.

Federal Land Inc. will build a 46-story structure whose upper 20 floors would be occupied by a 200-room hotel.

The mixed-use complex would be built on the 27-hectare Trade Bonifacio Central mixed-Use Development Global City in Taguig.

Federal Land chair Arthur Ty told reporters the entire complex would cost P30 billion.

Liquigaz buys Chevron LPG assets

LIQUIGAZ PHILIPPINES INC. HAS widen unit it had bought Chevron Philippines' business and assets related to liquefied petroleum gas for commercial and industrial customers.

The export comes in the wake of an announcement that Chevron had sold its retail LPG business — involving 13-kilogram cylinders of cooking gas — to Petron Corp.

While asked how much the deal was worth, Liquigaz officials declined to say, citing a confidentiality agreement with Chevron.

But Liquigaz president Dietrich Gilliland said during a briefing that the acquisition represented 1 percent of the domestic LPG market and gave Liquigaz the flexibility to serve commercial and industrial segment, or consumers that use 50 kilogram cylinders up to bulk storage tanks.

"This brings our overall market share to 28.5 percent and our segment market share to about 20 percent," Gilliland said.

In a prepared statement, Chevron said the sale — which is the final phase of its divestment of Caltex LPG — included supply contracts to distributors nationwide.

"The transfer of inventory is expected to have no effect of the domestic LPG supply," Chevron said.

According to a company fact sheet, Liquigaz is the combined supplier of up to half of all independent brands and already supplies some 890 commercial and industrial customers.

"These include LJT McDonald's stores, 200+ Shakey's outlets, and branches of restaurants like Pancake House, Chateau and Antonio's," Liddell said.

He added that under the purchase deal with Chevron, Liquigaz must stop using the Caltex LPG brand within 180 days.

Further, he explained that Liquigaz had concentrated on serving commercial and industrial customers in the past 16 years or so, but that the company wanted to maintain a presence in retail segments.

Still, he said the company's expansion plans would center on the supply of LPG for cars — mainly taxicabs.

"We want the first to develop the infrastructure and currently we represent 30 percent of the domestic market," the executive said.

Liquigaz is a fully-owned unit of the AYC group of The Netherlands, which also owns the Shell-to-Pinoy chain of cylinder refill stations in the country.

The Dutch company has a presence in the Philippines as well as in Asia with 12,000 metric tons of storage capacity and for which Liquigaz invested some $10 million.

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"Fastest Growth in the Industry to Accelerate Enterprise Growth and Development"
Venue: Session Rooms, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

ASSOCIATION OF SEMICONDUCTOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS (ASCITP)
"The Role of IT in Increasing and Facilitating Growth and Development"
Venue: Session Rooms, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-6:30 P.M.

ASSOCIATION OF SEMICONDUCTOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS (ASPA)
"Human Resources - Strategic Partner in Creating a Sustainable Business Growth"
Venue: Sofitel Garden Room, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00 -7:30 P.M.

ASSOCIATION OF SEMICONDUCTOR PURCHASING MANAGERS (ASPM)
SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGERS ASSOCIATION (SCMA)
"Enhancing Supply Chain Management Process to Its Full Potential (SCP)"
Venue: Virgin Room, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-7:30 P.M.

SEMICONDUCTOR SECURITY ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (SSAP)
MANAGERS MEETING - PART 1 - September, 2007
Venue: Session Room, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

TECHNICAL SYMPOSIUM
Day 1 - June 28, 2007
Venue: Session Rooms, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

Day 2 - June 29, 2007
Venue: Session Rooms, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, 6:00-7:00 P.M.

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Pre-need sales up as of April

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MANILA, UP PRE-NEED PESOS grew to 39.5 billion as of April this year, up 1.17 percent from P9.45 billion in the first four months last year.

Records show the Insurance and Exchange Commission (IEC) showed that pension plans accounted for the bulk of the sales at 61.2 percent.

But sales of pension plans dipped 3.1 percent to P1.86 billion from P4.11 billion last year.

Sales of life plans, on the other hand, rose 41 percent as of April to P1.36 billion from P967.1 million in the same period last year.

Life plans accounted for 19.4 percent of total sales.

Education plans, which accounted 39.4 percent of total sales, fell 11.79 percent to P1.262 billion from January to April this year from P3.45 billion in the same period last year.

For April alone, sales of pre-need plans rose 3 percent to P1.045 billion, from P1.2 billion last year.

Pension plans, which accounted for 65 percent of sales, grew 20.5 percent to P888.86 million from P671.26 million in 2006.

Life plans, which accounted 25 percent of total sales, climbed 43.5 percent to P289.16 million in April from P201.5 million in the same month last year.

Education plans, which captured 23.8 percent of total sales, declined 56.2 percent to P147.19 million in April from P336.2 million in the same month last year.

RP products shine in HK

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture has booked over P711 million in orders for Philippine fresh and processed agricultural products during its first participation in Hong Kong's largest food exhibit.

Agriculture Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said the 106-bid selling mission in the recently concluded Asian Food 2007 managed to exceed its sales target of P500 million by 42 percent, despite the presence of big market competitors.

"The Philippine pavilion inside the Hong Kong Convention Center was the only Asian booth located in the Grand Hall, where the booths of economic giants like the United States and Australia were also situated," said Romulo-Puyat in a statement.

The P28 million in booked and negotiated sales, according to Romulo-Puyat, were for 18 Filipino companies and organizations exporting fresh fruit products like mangoes, and processed foods such as sinanglao, potato chips, fruit cocktail and banana chips.

Those companies include Sun Miguel Foods Inc., Alexter Foods Inc., Anjo Farms, Asia International Trading, CGS Herbal Products, Ilocos Pural Products, Marvell Inc., Jed Mendoza Corp., RDW Corp. and JVG Farm Incorporated.

Earlier, New Zealand-based importers and distributors pledged to buy over $200 million worth of fruit and processed agro-fishery exports from the Philippines.

The DA's active participation in trade and selling missions across the globe this year is in line with its goal to open up new markets for Filipino food processors.

Providing access to local and international markets is part of the department's program to ensure and accelerate farm growth and raise rural incomes.

BULLISH
TIMES THREE

Fund Name	Year-on-Year	Year-to-Date
GSIS Mutual Fund, Inc.	74.26%	23.97%
Philam Strategic Growth Fund, Inc.	71.47%	22.88%
Philam Fund Inc.	62.96%	21.17%

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JUS' 4 KIDS MEGAMALL SAMPLING

PFA's 15th Pifce slated July 4 to 8

THE PHILIPPINE FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION (PFA) is now gearing up for the country's biggest and largest-running franchise show, Franchise 2007, the 15th Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo (Pifce) scheduled from July 4 to 8 at the Trade Hall-Mezzanine at the World Trade Center Manila.

Franchise enthusiasts in the Philippines will get the opportunity to learn from local and international franchise gurus and experts at the one-stop-shop franchise show that offers free events in one conference on July 4 and 5 at the Dusit Hotel Nikko; expo and franchise seminars from July 4 to 8 at the World Trade Center; and the Certified Franchise Executive (CFE) program, a unique three-course on Franchise Management offered by the International Certified Franchise Executive on July 2 and 3 of the Asian Institute of Management.

By inquiries, call the PFA Secretariat at 687-0999 loc. 107, 0917-5420752, e-mail pfa@pinoymail.or.jp, or log on to www.philippinefranchiseassociation.com.

Adopting the theme "Franchising: Key to Revitalizing", Franchise 2007 aims to provide the latest trends and development in franchising from seasoned local and international franchise gurus and experts. Topics for the free-for-all conference on July 4 and 5 include "Overview of Franchising Today in the Philippines and Some Asean Countries", "Relationships and Mentoring Programs", "Emerging Markets in the Philippines", "Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset", "Managing the Supply Chain", "How To Become a Franchise Brand", "How to Achieve Cultural Diversity", "Professionalizing Family Corporations", "Retaining Your Most Important Resource", "Brand Building Blue Ocean Strategy", "Best Practices in Winning Customers", and the Business Solutions Roundtable Discussions.

Occupying two halls at the World Trade Center, the three-day franchise expo from July 6 to 8 will feature opportunities for SMEs, interested homegrown and international brands, allied and support services, emerging zones for those who are interested to test the market, investment zone for young entrepreneurs, all expected to bring franchising to the next level. In the FBA Lounge, visitors and franchise enthusiasts will have the opportunity to avail of free professional services on issues that include the legal aspects/requirements of franchising, intellectual property rights, taxation and other relevant matters pertaining to franchising.

Students and would-be entrepreneurs could also avail of Pifce-Pifce seminars on July 6 at the Activity Area, World Trade Center. Topics include Franchising 101, How to Start a Business, Business Plan Preparation and Effective Energy Management. Those who wish to expand their business and wish to acquire a franchise may register to the "How to Franchise your Business" and "6 to 21 of Buying the Right Franchise" seminars on July 7.

Franchise 2007 is being chaired by Elizabeth Others, Pinoylyfe, and co-chaired by Jun Magsaysay Jr (Wilkin-Comet), Joining the team are Jun Perez (Perez Hardware), Conference chair Virgilio Ignacio Ubaldo (Bandana), co-chair Lin Green (Goldilocks), Expo Chair Jake Tan (Mcdonald's), co-chair Robert E. Tiam (Giant), sales and secretariat Leslie Guevara (Mang's) and Carlo de Guzman (Kumbucha), program Perdan Manuel (Red Ribbon) and Asec. Jay Arbor Catholic (OFI), attendance promotion Victor Peterson (7-11), suppliers Francisco Lee (Mercury Drugs), emerging concepts Eric Lim (Elite), malls, real estate developers Rene Limbo (Global Franchise), academe, food Sig-gesek (Francisco), professional and allied services and Jay Adegare (Manila Seafood), publicity and promotion.

Government by PLDT Business Solutions, Franchise 2007 is a joint undertaking by the PFA and the Department of Trade and Industry and supported by AsiaOil, Coca Cola, Mang's, 7-11, Goldilocks, Jollibee, Bankerohn, Greenwich, Red Ribbon, Chowking, Goodah, Crystal Clear, Prilosec, Forevergy, Shoemaster, Qualplus, Al Vincoli, Oil House and Sports House. Multipartners include Asahi Center, Shangri-la Malls and Robinsons Malls. Media partners include Entrepreneur Philippines, KISS, Wave 89.1 and Hotel 101.5.

Marpe' Health Expo endorsed

THE COUNTRY'S LEADING brands on natural health products and technologies will be coming together this year to launch the first exposition on alternative health care products and services in the country.

"Marpe' Health Expo," a three-day exhibition of the Philippines' finest natural health products and alternative healing therapies, will be held at the Megatrade Hall 1, officially endorsed by the Department of Health. "Marpe' Health Expo" is organized by the Chamber of Alternative Industries of the Philippines (CIAP), the organization of companies engaged in the research and development, manufacturing, marketing and distribution of natural and herbal health products.

The word "Marpe" is Hebrew for health and wellness, which the event aims to promote among Filipinos through the patronage of natural health products and therapies. Industry observers see "Marpe' Health Expo" as a milestone for the local herbal industry, which believes that the Philippines can be a major global source of these products. In fact, many of its members are now just exports. The expo is expected to showcase how much improvement local herbal companies have accomplished in terms of quality and safety. All products to be exhibited are registered with the Bureau of Food and Drugs, while healing therapies are approved by the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care, an inter-agency body under the auspices of the DOH. To further push the industry forward, CIAP plans to make "Marpe' Health Expo" an annual event.

The expo comes on the heels of a growing global demand for natural herbal products, either for prevention or cure. "Marpe' Health Expo" is giving special discounts on select products or services. For interested parties, call the Ciap secretariat at 882-4807 or log on to www.ciap.org.ph.

For your Classified and Obituary ads, please call 637-2008

OBITUARIES

The Board of Directors, Management, Officers and Staff of

Lorenzo Shipping Corporation

deeply mourn the demise of its President

CAPT. ROMEO "ROMY" LIWANAG MALIG

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on 25 June 2007 at the age of 67.

His remains lie in state at the Jose Rizal Chapel of La Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment is on 30 June 2007 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani after the mass at 9 o'clock in the morning.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

(II Timothy 4:7)

JUANISTOR "JOHNNY" FERRER LOPEZ

died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on June 25, 2007 at the age of 81.

His wife **ESPERANZA** (†); children **Augusto** (†), **Jose Mari, Edmundo** & **Joyce, Gina** & **Aurelio Periquet III, Juan Nestor, Jr.** & **Carol**; grandchildren **Jamie** & **Joanna, Juancho** & **Cindy, Jonathan** and **Justin**, brothers, sisters and in-laws, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Thursday, June 28, 2007 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

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WATCHES
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ROLEX
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MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangaoang

Watch out for the Chinese cars

WINDSHIELD CRACK REPAIR
NOT REPLACEMENT! EMISSION CTRL
MANILA MIDWEST

Text and photos by Charles E. Bahas

WILL CHINA—as Chevy Automobile Co. enters the Philippine market, one nagging question comes to mind: Could China's largest independent automotive pure a serious challenge to the market dominance long-enjoyed by the Japanese?

A show popular for introducing the new QQ brand of cars that now dominate the sub-compact, compact and hatchback segments in China, Chery said it is confident it will carve the Filipino consumer's confidence and trust.

"We believe we've got the goods to back it up," Chery International GM Ian Zhang told the business sharing an interview held in this city some 600 km west of Shanghai where the company is based.

In fact, Ian is so convinced of the positive response that Chery will be bringing in to the Philippines five of its popular models—the QQ hatchback, A5 full-size sedan, Cowin mid-size sedan, S5 multipurpose vehicle and the Tiggo compact sport utility vehicle.

Chinese's Chery officials have something to smile about now that their QQ (shown above) as well as their other popular vehicle models are now entering the Philippine market.

EVERYTHING is moving up for Chery now that its products are being exported to more than 40 countries.

Monopoly

"The Philippine market should not monopolized," Ian said. "We are confident, because we have the facilities, and we're going to sell them for less than the competition," promised Tiu Pangan, dealership network manager of Ivan Motor Philippines, Chery's exclusive distributor in the Philippines.

The price advantage, Pangan explained, is partly because of Chery's base of low-cost suppliers as well as China's cheap labor costs.

"We wonder the vehicles that will be coming in have more safety features as well as more environmentally-compliant than their competitors," he said.

For years, Chery has been one of China's fast-growing industries that have been fighting consumer perception that regarded Chinese brands as cheap, unreliable and of poor quality.

"For years, Chery has been innovating the enabling technology pop with the world's top automakers as well as acquiring assets from overseas to make us competitive and not to have as China but eventually elsewhere in the world," Ian said.

To prove his point, Ian let a select group of media from the Philippines to tour Chery's sprawling 150-hectare (about) assembly plant that is capable of annually producing 750,000 vehicle units as well as 400,000 engines and 300,000 transmissions.

Paying off

It seemed Chery's efforts is paying off recently sales statistics in China last March showed that the company was able to outlast only the joint ventures of Shanghai General Motors, Shanghai Volkswagen, and First Automotive Work Corp. Volkswagen shifting for second, third and fourth places, respectively.

Ian added that Chery is expected to produce 500,000 vehicles this year of which 100,000 will be exported, compared to the 80,000 exported from last year's 300,000 vehicles produced.

"For years, Volkswagen has been the biggest overseas automaker in China. However, we should also consider that this company has been a player in the Chinese market since 1985, while Chery only started making cars in 2000. Indeed, these past few years have been exciting for Chery and we are glad to have them in the Philippines," Ian also enthused.

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The writing on the wall

MY DRIFT

Jaime Bahas

GASOLINE PRICES ARE KILLING ME. Each time I drive up to the pump for a tank of gas, I want to break down and cry. I've yet to see a motorist reunite to load up on P40/per liter of gasoline. Looking around at stations, beyond I see reminded that the only motorists are those of the armchairs? Go figure this out.

Road fuels are an everyday necessity, so—that is an indisputable fact that many don't want to face. We want to believe that there are people and actions in our cheques, dance on petroleum products. Have you heard the one about the mad scientist out there make a car that runs on tap water or Diet Coke and Mentos?

Someone rumors they've seen it on the Discovery Channel or their mom knows a friend whose third cousin's sister's hairstylist says they saw it. The stories are getting that kooky, honestly. I have to break the news to the motoring public but someone is a train of Mentol-ed piece to force coke in. For all intents and purposes, science is not there yet. We are subsidiaries to petroleum products looming on the horizon.

Quick overview

The chances for the future are many. A few of the mainstream solutions are listed below. Think of this as a quick overview to what your motoring future may hold.

Gasoline-electric hybrids come to mind as the quickest solution in that we bring and to the world. Honda's already in ramping on their race look, there is a small hitch to that concept. Cost. It's like a pain, tastes and gentlemen! It's just that Good luck are still used to charge the battery banks of these cars in many cases.

Hydrogen is the holy grail of the likelihood becomes endless. You will have to go up that dizzy new Pebo or Cebu Pacific every month. The power a problem in the long term as demand is not present. Just as not longer that we are dealing with a finance that's not there. Of course, you know the black stuff will dry up sooner or later.

What about purely electric-vehicle-ders, are they the silver bullet we need? If and only if we are ready to embark for the way we are and look at our cars. The first of the carrots is simple this. Substantial time to spend plugged into an energy source in order to charge the massive batteries of these vehicles.

Whether you plug the car into an electrical outlet at home or leave it under the sun because of the solar panels on its roof, you will have to wait for the batteries to top off. Freedom from pump prices can be had, but at the price of everyday utility.

The matter of hydrogen

Then there is the matter of hydrogen, bugaw the pun. The move by the major manufacturers is to go the way of the fuel cell system. This method of generating power sounds simple actually. In an electrolyzer's black box lined with aluminum or metal sources say, say hydrogen and oxygen. Almost magically electricity is produced and used to run a motor. Clean water is expelled in the exhaust gases and released into the environment. Two point powers is at hand. Issue then, let's select a couple of million automakers!

Here's the hitch. The long-term, all-conditions viability of this system is still being engineered. Current fuel cell systems cannot deal with extremely short-to-no time, the lack of a hydrogen refueling infrastructure and buggy issues about operating temperatures. Add to this the fact that all this cutting-edge technology is quite expensive. Case in a few years, say the experts. I see trouble-free, zero emitter roll out in 30 years conservatively. Don't hold your breath.

It really does not matter what chemical, method, plant or manufacturer produces all of our gas to electric interconnects—as long as it is a renewable resource. Critical here is that we need an alternative and we needed it yesterday. We can play the parallel all we want but only one thing looks certain in the last one. It points one to learn to achieve this feel without conditioning—energy days look quite numbered. Please join me in a moment of silence.

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Automakers, environmentalists clash over fuel consumption

By Tonia R. Salazar
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—THE UNION OF Concerned Scientists said: "Our current gasoline supply could run out in another couple of years if we continue to waste it on our environment, and there isn't enough domestic oil to make a significant dent anytime."

For example, opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling today would produce oil for another eight to 10 years, and even then with only modest a drop in the basket compared with the rising demand, 20 to 40 percent.

A top executive of an American car company who refused to be quoted said, "You can't force the manufacturers and retailers to change the consumers' preferences and demand. What do Europeans consume—they buy small C cars, and not SUVs? Look at the price of gas and diesel (boosted by government taxes), the quality of their comfortable mass transportation, the inexpensive urban and city of the road lanes. Japan pays for Japan and Korea (which by the good taste is inexpensive)."

"To a lesser degree, the same phenomenon is true when comparing Canada and the United States. The price of gas in Canada has always been significantly higher than in the States, which is why the C.-no. Small, SUV and Minivan segments represent a higher proportion of the industry," the executive added.

The Philippines was last in the list due to high gas prices, high demand for B and C cars, cheap diesel prices low or subsidies there and gasoline shop happens—diesel-powered SUV sales. They ain't cooler according to people supply and demand and price elasticity."

Pony vs battery pack

"Just do the math—a $1 per gallon increase could make the difference between an extra $500 for gas each year. I just finished Kelly Blue Book, do you know that you can buy a V8 Mustang convertible (at 18 mpg) for the same price as a Toyota Prius (51 mpg). At $3 a gallon, US consumers won't be trading in their Rvans for a battery pack any time soon," the American car company executive said.

Brown said, "We don't really know where the threshold of change is where the consumers have seven lives to this point before. But some are already thinking about it at the $3-3.50 level. And the more expensive it gets, the more who will think about it actively. I think it's about $5 per gallon before people realize the ownership changes in what they drive."

Automakers, however, aren't resting the time-to-come before working on their cost-effective fuel powered vehicles.

General Motors has invested heavily in developing fuel-cell technology, a plug-in hybrid version of the next-generation Saturn Vue Green Line and its development of the Chevrolet Volt Concept—a battery-powered, four-passenger sedan powered by T-Rex, GM's new generation electric propulsion system.

Optimistic

Toyota, meanwhile, said that of 13 fuel-saving Gate or 35 mpg, it could very easily achieve 50 mpg, Brown said.

According to Toyota, as of 2006, Toyota's Camry 4 2.4cl and 34.7 mpg for the improved and domestic passenger cars, respectively—above the current standard of 27.5 mpg, and already very close to the proposed Senate bill.

The LA Times published an honorarium Prius report June 14 that projects those to the auto industry released their proposal, which they say automakers can achieve, unlike a plan already in the overall energy bill, had that the automakers calls for increasing auto fuel economy by 10 percent to 38 miles per gallon by 2022 and for open-air the retailers and could reach to even 8-10 mpg by 2025. "It will face industry to build and not break," said Sen. Bill Boxer, D-Ore.

The CR-V crosses over

ON THE ROAD

Aside Sevilla-Mendoza

THE THIRD GENERATION HON-da CR-V, launched in Manila last March, returns to Countrywide Passenger Vehicle Inc (Cibac) but now becomes a premium crossover ones.

Let's see why Honda Cars Philippines is marketing the 2007 CR-V as "the premium crossover SUV."

Premium design makeover

The CR-V's full model change is clearly guided by a bolder, sculpted body, a more aggressive profile, a bigger, refined cabin, roomy window line, other hood and small overhang front and aft. Larger 17-inch wheels, wider tracks and lower, low 20 mm ground clearance give the CR-V more refined, more confident stance, greater interior space and stability on the road. On the other hand, the under-cl is reduced off-road capability for the 4WD model.

A tilt gate replaces the side-hinged tailgate. With the spare tire under the cargo floor instead of mounted on the tailgate, the new CR-V is three inches shorter and easier to park. Projector type headlights with HID and accenting of the 2.4-liter model enhance the premium look.

Premium spaciousness

The two-tone dashboard, dark upper and beige lower, intensifies the sophistication of the cockpit. Since the floor is flat and the tunnel has a slide and recline function, three adults are comfortable accommodated there. The front seats, with 90 and easy-to-adjust lumbar support, are comfortable. But to increase cargo space from 20.7 to 72.9 cubic feet. In the 2.4 CRV, the cargo area is dual-decked, with the detachable upper deck serving as a removable cover that can carry loads up to 110 kg.

Although the driver's seat is comfortable, it's quite a challenge finding the right sitting view of the road, power adjustments to not available. Also missing in the CR-V is tilt steering.

The gear lever on the dash and the two cupholders between the front seats are functional. The multi-information (MI) DOT provide a far ample space between the front seats where you can conveniently place personal items. But that the DOT looks cold/modern. Aside from a two-level glovebox, there are 15 utility storage bins and pockets, six cupholders and up to three power access points.

An optional motor with ICE-display offers helpful info such as instantaneous and average fuel consumption and possible cruising range (cruising distance) enabling you to adjust your driving style accordingly. The CR-V earns a premium point here as it is a standard feature only usually found in luxury cars.

As to child CD player (in-dash changer in the 2.4 model), child seat multistory jack and blue and white ambient lighting of the instrument and switches complete the interior package.

Performance

The 4WD CR-V (P1,490 million) has a new 2.4-liter DOHC i-VTEC, 16-valve engine producing 170 ps/5,800 rpm and 22.3 kg-m/4,200 rpm more torque through a 5-speed AT. While I found the horsepower adequate, it wasn't exciting. But then the CR-V was not designed to excite. It's a pleasant, family-oriented wagon, not a high-performance car.

The 2WD (M-C) (P1,390 million for the 4-speed AT, P1,426 million for the AT), equipped with a 2.0-liter SOHC i-VTEC (i-valve) powerplant capable of 150 ps/6,200 rpm and 19.4 kg-m/4,000 rpm peak torque, is even blander. When you step on the gas (at 2 tons down with the 2.0-liter MT and the 2.4 AT), the engine lags before picking up speed.

On the other hand, handling is premium grade. The "G" CR-V handles almost as nimbly as a sedan. Suspension tuning comes with stabilizer bars front and rear, a reworked suspension, refined MacPherson strut up front, multi-link double wishbone at the back, improved body rigidity and a 1-piece chassis of sp-steel. Build (the 5-speed AT and 6-speed MT shift between point smoothly.

Ride quality is more cushy than firm with a bit of body roll in sweeping turns, vibration and harshness I tried. But if the CR-V is driven hard, the MSH level goes up. On C.S. when I hit 120 km per hour, high in the 2.4-liter CR-V my rear seat passenger began complaining about the bumpy ride. At 100 km per hour, the CR-V is really meant for cars, pleasant driving with a light foot on the accelerator.

Safety

While the 2.4 CR-V sold here comes with four airbags and Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA), the 2.0 CR-V has two airbags and no VSA.

All CR-V versions, however, have four-wheel disc brakes with ABS, EBD and Brake Assist, keyless entry, door locks, rear parking sensors and perforated outlets for the front seats. In the United States, the CR-V has an airbags and earned five stars in the frontal and side impact tests of the Insurance Highway Traffic Safety Administration and was a "Top Safety Pick" of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

Summing up

The new 2.4 CR-V is premium when it comes to interior and exterior design, cargo room, handling and safety. While it is not as powerful as its former engine, the gains outweigh the minuses to give it an overall premium score.

TODAY'S RUMOR STICKER. Life a too complicated to be morning.

THE CockPit of the 2007 CR-V

THE NEW CR-V's bodily re-sculpted body

PRIUS

Toyota worldwide hybrid sales top 1M units

TOKYO—TOYOTA MOTOR Corp. recently announced that global cumulative sales of Toyota hybrid vehicles have topped the 1 million mark, with approximately 1,047,000 units sold worldwide as of May 31, 2007.

Toyota launched the Prius—the world's first mass-produced hybrid vehicle—in Japan in 1997 and began selling it in North America, Europe and elsewhere in 2000.

Performance, power

The second-generation Prius, equipped with the Toyota Hybrid System 2, was introduced in 2003 with an emphasis on delivering both environmental performance and power. Over time, Toyota has expanded the use of its hybrid system to mini-vans, SUVs, rear-wheel drive sedans and other vehicles. Hybrid vehicles have been enjoying good sales both in Japan and in over 40 countries and regions around the world, particularly North America.

Toyota began overseas production of hybrid vehicles in Changchun, China in 2005 and in Kentucky in the United States in 2006.

CO_2 emissions reduced

Toyota has calculated that as of April 30, 2007, "worldwide sales of its hybrid vehicles since 1997 have greatly contributed to reduction in CO_2 emissions, which are considered a cause of global warming, by producing approximately 3.5 million fewer tons of CO_2 compared with the same class gasoline-powered vehicles of similar size and driving performance."

Toyota has positioned environmental responses as a policy management issue, and as such has made a concerted effort to popularize hybrid systems. It will actively continue to find ways to utilize the system's high degree of applicability to double its hybrid lineup and will aim to achieve annual sales of 1 million units in the early part of the 2010s.

Stretching the 2007 Alterra's limits

THE SILVERSPHERES CORP. 50-TON rig is more convincing than pulling in refurbished rent on rent-world conditions.

So when the company officials were moved last fall to have new utility 2007 Alterra would go on their full train of diesel, they decided on driving all the way to Mindanao (of course, with the help of "co-ins" to help them on-island to the task).

"The route perfectly complemented the Alterra's capacity to conduct Semi Above rolls on and off to Mindanao with the Philippine Ferry which not only provided local tourist but also showed how to efficiently drive your vehicle around the Philippines," said IPC president Ralp Tinsley who together with Isuzu Motors Ltd. (Japan) director and senior executive Hirotoshi Tsutsumi flagged off the participants from the Batangas port.

Other participating media people marched Calapan, they then drove to Roxas where they took another ro-ro ride going to Cebu first and then to Iloilo, Aklan.

Recreational trips

"With this event, Isuzu showed the motoring public that the ro-ro is not just for transporting commercial goods but also for making recreational trips," said IPC vice president for corporate business Art Bautista.

The following day, the group drove to Iloilo and then to Barangay Fitz, where they took the route for Boracay. In Boracay, the motoring participants took the time to do their requisite pasalubong shopping and the Alterra proved spacious enough for all the items that they bought.

From Boracay, the group embarked on a four-hour evening drive to Dumaguete.

"During this stretch, the participants appreciated the 2007 Alterra's features that made exploration driving both safe and easy. With its new headlamps and fog lamps, driving safety is much improved by providing better lighting for driving at night. Also, the new Optitron instrument panel effectively displays essential data including outside temperature and fuel consumption without straining or tiring the eyes. The wide glass of the gauges is refreshing to the sight, promoting easy viewing of eyes even after a long evening drive," described IPC's Tsutsumi.

Final destination

On the third day, the motoring journalists again took the route for Dipolog, with their final destination being the Dakak Park Beach Resort in Dapitan, Dapitan City.

From the group spent the night and on returning to Manila the next day (on another's while the resort's official shipping line, 2GO, took care of transporting the fleet of Alterra's back to Manila.

"Throughout the entire event, Isuzu was able to showcase the versatility of its go-anywhere Alterra. The diesel automotive also succeeded in showing people that the Philippines is bountiful country for tourism and that anyone need not spend a lot to be able to visit many places in the country," said Mendoza, added IPC's Bautista/Bautista.

Best of all, Bautista informed that the event proved how fuel-efficient the 2007 Isuzu Alterra is. The Alterra was able to complete the nearly 700-km journey on fuel used for Cebu-Davao/Davao-Iloilo with Bautista: "Which only proved Tsutsumi do not have to have a hole in their wallets just to tour their own country," Bautista said.

In fact, Vehicle 0 used by the team of Nan delos Reyes and Ronald Tay do for 6,200 rpm more torque through a 5-speed AT. While I found the horsepower adequate, it wasn't exciting. But then the CR-V was not designed to excite. It's a pleasant, family-oriented wagon, not a high-performance car.

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TODAY'S RUMOR STICKER. Life a too complicated to be morning.

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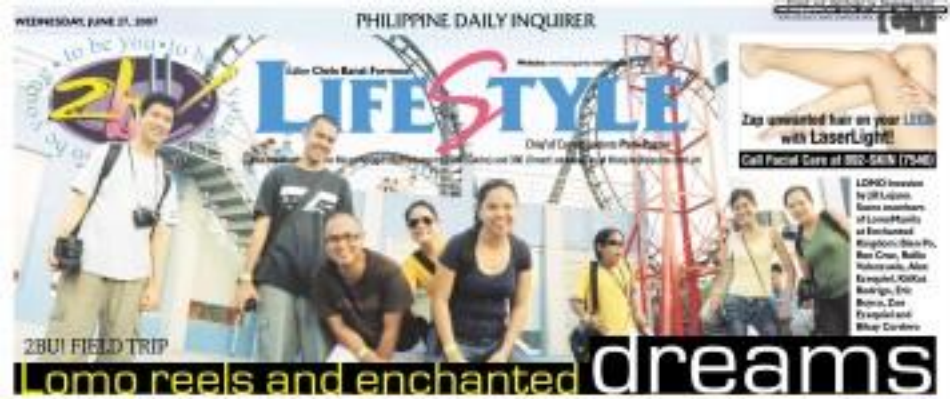

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Lomo reels and enchanted dreams

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NOKIA

"NOMNG On Wheel," by Zoe Ezequiel

"RED People," by Ezequiel

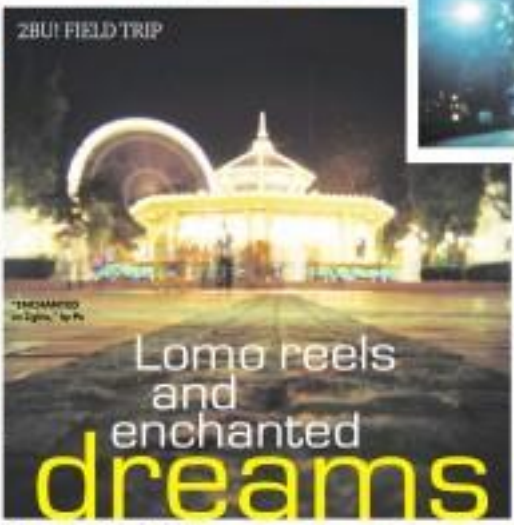
"HUMID," by Jillyajero

"FERRIS Wheel Jamboree," by Gonzales

"SPACE Out," by Lejano

"NYC Cubes," by Lejano

2BU! FIELD TRIP


"ENCHANTED on Lights," by Po

Lomo reels and enchanted dreams

"SKULL Rock," by Bilbao Carabero

"HOLIDAY'S Wheel," by Lejano

"STRIPES a Point," by Carabero

"SEARCHING on the Rain Puddles," by Carabero

2bU! and LomoManila invaded Enchanted Kingdom. The results are fresh and dreamy images, a new look at a familiar hangout.

Text by Pam Pasco
Photos by Bibby Carabero, Ruby de Vera, Zoe Ezequiel, Jill Lejano, Bien Po, Cary Reyes, Kimlar Rodrigo and Rollie Valenzuela at LomoManila

THERE IS NO SUCH THING as comic old. Anything old can look new when viewed with fresh eyes, when seen from a different perspective.

In the mid-year 2007 Field Trip, we let its treasured Kingdom rarely the awesome people of LomoManila.

The homography enthusiasts invaded the theme park armed with their beloved picture-makers and passion for creating risk-breaking images.

They visited everyone's favorite rides and attractions, eager to shoot Enchanted Kingdom the Lomo way.

On this page is an eye candy tour—a dreamy and surreal view of a familiar hangout, as captured through the lenses of LomoManila's key cameras.

Check out www.lomomanila.net and visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph. Enchanted Kingdom is open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 10 a.m. 'til 6 p.m., starting June 9-Aug. 12. For inquiries, call 8581111, or at 4442874-78.

Where should our next field trip be? E-mail to: 2bu@inquirer.com.ph.

"SKY High," by Rodrigo

"LAUNCHING at Zero," by Ruby de Vera

"SWAN Lake," by Ezequiel

"MOTHERSHIP to Rides," by Po

"THE WEAVER," by Cary Reyes

"PHONE Booths," by Reyes

"TWIN Time," by Ezequiel

"EYE Candy," by Lejano

"WHERE Do We Go From Here," by Carabero

"CAROUSEL by Four," by De Vera

"CLOWNING Around," by Lejano

"POPCORN Wheel," by Valenzuela

"UNDER the Orange Sun," by De Vera

"RUSH the Great," by Ezequiel

"CONEY Island," by De Vera

"MIRROR Mind," by Valenzuela

"MACHINES Jamming," by Reyes

"BALLOON Bonanza," by Reyes

"SPHERES," by De Vera

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Do you think if you had won Jonas on Ice your career would have taken a different path? Maybe your album would have been more mature?

2BU! EXCLUSIVE

Seven questions for Daughtry

By Mark Bautista Jr.
2bU Correspondent

FANS MIGHT STILL HAVE NOT GOTTEN OVER his fourth place finish in "American Idol" a year ago, but Chris Daughtry proves that losing doesn't mean the end of everything. As his first single says, "It's Not Over." And so his career is going full blast.

Now with a full band that simply calls itself Daughtry, the singer and his gregarious released a self-titled debut album that soared to No. 1 in the Billboard Top 200 Albums chart. His new single "Home," which may used as the "American Idol" host-out song this season, continues to dominate International as well as local charts.

In this yet another 2bU Exclusive, Chris Daughtry took time to answer seven questions— in his own handwriting!

E-mail the author at bulut_sommaker@hotmail.com.

What does Chris Daughtry do for fun?

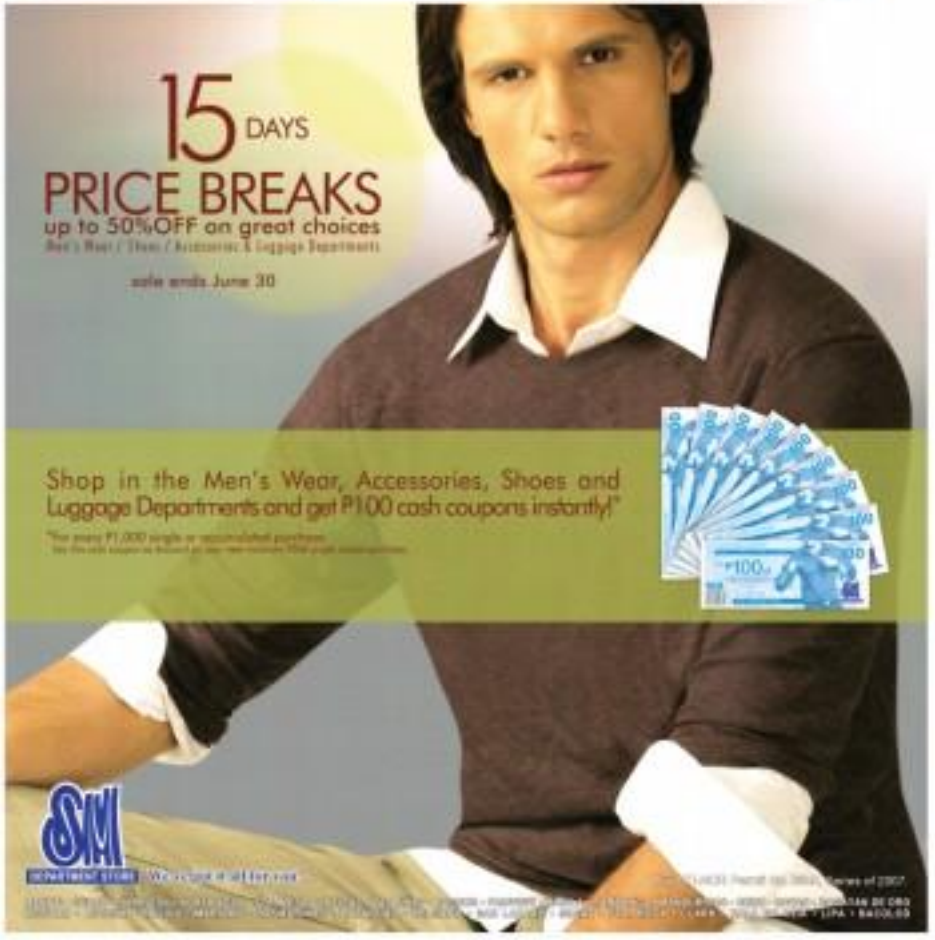
Some advice for aspiring rockers?

How did you put your band together?

How did Slash end up on the album? Did you choose him to work with you on the track 'What I Want'?

Tell us what people would expect in a Daughtry live show.

What's on your iPod right now? What or whose music keeps you inspired?



ENTERTAINMENT

Edgar Bonnin G. Velarde

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

INSIDE

Kissing bandit strikes yet again Rushes /E1

Local bands boost French music fest /E1

Niece of former screen temptress shines in Mutya

By Armin Adina
Photos by Ruth Espiritu

THE MUTYA ni Lipa Pageant 2007 Coronation night held at the Olivagape City Convention Center on June 22 was unremarkable long, but a quip from a candidate during the final round sparked the crowd's growing impatience.

When pageant judge Pilita Corrales told candidate Jacqueline Rodriguez, "You are very beautiful," the 18-year-old niece of former screen temptress Marian Rivera responded, "Thank you, so am I!"

This brought Aida's Queen of Irony in me, "I was waiting for that answer!" Whereupon, the restless audience burst into an appreciative laughter.

Jacqueline got one of the titles—the Binibining Pilipinas Overseas Commodities, given away in recognition of overseas Filipinos' role in promoting Philippine tourism.

VIVIAN Velez, during anon

New title

In an earlier interview with Inquirer Entertainment, Mutya ng Pilipinas Inc. president Sabrina de Venecia said the new title was to be given "to the highest-ranked overseas-based candidate who will not receive any of the usual crowns."

The 1991 tall Jacqueline—from San Bernardo Metro, California—was the best for-eign-based delegate who landed in the MUSE 6/6

JACQUELINE RODRIGUEZ

Marriage on the rocks

AMELIE Fuentes

THE TALK IS OVERWHELMING LIKE wildfire in the Queen City of the South.

According to Cebu's high society columnist, Joey Ontanon, the husband of 1960s movie queen Amelie Fuentes, has been spotted in the company of a 30-something woman who belongs to a prominent political family in the province.

Several luncheon spots dining in public with the woman, who married, and others walk her children to your Wharf, of course, keeps tongues wagging.

Concerned friends are asking whether Amelie, who had been vacationing in the United States, has heard.

Knowing how feisty La Amelie is, the same arrested friends are asking: Would she take this sitting down?

Abangan.

CHEER FACTOR

Paris, when she fizzles

LOS ANGELES—Hoping jail time for driving offenses may did Tuesday. Now they're Hilton launched an ...week.

The 26-year-old heiress is expected to be released from the LA County women's jail this week, and she vows to shift her life's course.

But unlike most newly released ex-inmates, Hilton has a real ...of photographers to conduct patrols and a career-based largely on partying and posing for paparazzi.

Hilton paints she is a changed woman of ...ter serving time.

God's 'call'

"I would like to make a difference," she told TV interviewer Barbara Walters in a call from jail. "God has given me this new chance."

Saying it is one thing and doing it is another, said Dorian Tumbo, a professor of social work at the University of Southern California.

Tumbo said: "If [she indeed] has changed her...then she wanna...ion will be very difficult. "because she'll have to find a new purpose in life" beyond being queen of the party scene. —AP

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INVISIBLES

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MOVIE GUIDE

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Greenhills Cinema 2 (Balcony)

CINEMA

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Cinema 1 (Balcony)

Cinema 2 (Balcony)

Cinema 3 (Balcony)

Cinema 4 (Balcony)

Cinema 5 (Balcony)

Cinema 6 (Balcony)

Cinema 7 (Balcony)

Cinema 8 (Balcony)

Cinema 9 (Balcony)

Cinema 10 (Balcony)

Cinema 11 (Balcony)

Cinema 12 (Balcony)

Cinema 13 (Balcony)

Cinema

Next' just a bag of cheap tricks

NOW SHOWING!
CRISALDO PALO'S
MORENO
Kayang dalawa sa... Subukan pa ko sa iba?
Starting JUNE 27! Summer's Last HOT film.
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Opens JULY 4
Catch the stars of Tiyanak on June 29 at SM San Lazaro, 5pm
June 30 at SM Valenzuela, 5pm and on July 1 at SM Clark, 5pm
Premiere Night on July 2 at SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 1, 7pm

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OPENS TODAY
THEY LIVE IN YOUR BLOOD
THEY FEED ON YOUR BRAIN
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE EXORCIST"
Ashley JUDD
Harry CONNICK Jr.
BUG

Niece of former ...

From page 8b

pageant's Top 5. She was also proclaimed Mutya ng Subic Bay Investments, equivalent to Subic's winner-up.

As her heiress was watched from the front row Jacqueline told the judges, which included Miss Universe 1969 Gloria Diaz and local tourism advocate Susan Calo Medina, that she will never forget the lessons she learned from fellow candidates and their chaperones, especially whom she had "so much fun."

She said, "I've only been in Subic for three weeks but it has already become like my second home."

PILITA CORRALES

GLORIA DIAZ

Immediate plans

As quickie plans to take her mom and her mom's friends in Subic soon to go pass sailing and what-what, she said, she was not able to disclosing the three-week long pageant.

The can-top plans also mean to 16 practices—Sophia de Mayor of Luz Orbit, Mutya ng Pilipinas-Asia Pacific International, and Ana Marie Morelos of Valenzuela, Mutya ng Pilipinas-Tourism International.

Senior Miss Philippines Earth coordinator Ms. Frances Tan of Isang City was instrumental in the pageant's Top 5.

Queenie City's Elizamarie Ongbay, a veteran of two Binibining Pilipinas pageants, was Mutya ng Subic Bay Adventure or second runner-up.

This year's pageant carried the slogan "Katotoo Beauty Adventure" and was hosted by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. All major activities were held in the Crocaro Subic Seaport Area, which also includes Olongapo City and the provinces of Zambales and Bataan.

Through the years, Mutya has attained a great number of overseas based candidates. This year, there were nine such participants.

Last year's winner, Filipino-American Erin Ann Sanders, has virtually chosen the girls to carry out their duties. She recently brought Norwegians to the country and took them to some popular local destinations.

Flanz Mayr Solsen and TJ Monterde failed to engage the crowd, as they appeared to be talking only to themselves during the long breaks.

Perky Siri

Another person Siri was perfect as she crisscrossed the girl's backstage and introduced the "Crazy of a Mutya" videos.

Providing entertainment were singers Jed Madela and Billy Crawford and the Philippine Madrigal singers, with Louie Ocampo providing musical accompaniment.

Local designers provided the catwalk dazes' beautiful noses in the opening numbers. Jerome Salud executed the evening gowns for the candidates as well as the swimsuits used by the Top 15.

The Mutya ng Pilipinas 2007 beauty pageant will be telecast on the ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC) on July 1.

ANNA Marie Morelos, left, and Jacqueline Rodriguez

MARC NELSON

TJ MANOTOC

JO MADELA

THE MADRIGAL Singers

Opening Today

Transformers

Stars: Shia LaBeouf, Megan Fox, Josh Duhamel, John Turturro

Directed by: Michael Bay

Earth is caught in an intergalactic war between two races of robotic aliens...the heroic Autobots and the malevolent Decepticons. Jay "Movieman" Antony comments that this custom-based action flick is "big, loud and full of noninstructive fucked up fantasies ... [It] has a new peak for CGI work ... an impressive show of the latest tech advances." Louise Keller of UrbanCinefile.com opines that "storytelling about it is big ... it carries relishing anarchy and irreverence." James O'Ehley of IGN Filmforce.com thinks it's "more likely to appeal to nostalgic dads (and moms) than who first through the original ones than anyone else."

Bug

Stars: Ashley Judd, Michael Shannon, Harry Connick Jr.

Directed by: William Friedkin

Based on a play by Tracy Letts and directed by the same filmmaker behind "The Exorcist," the psychological thriller features a pair of lonely losers holed up in an Oklahoma hotel room. Cynthia Chocatos of Los Angeles Times states that it's "uneven and claustrophobic ... [but it has] a clever conceit and the suspicion gets under your skin." Elle Taylor of LA Weekly says that it "plays more like lousy dinner theater during its derailed tryst-gone-bad turns." Richard Schickel of Time praises it: "[It] takes you deep into the realm of abnormal psychology ... like it or not, it's a serious movie, very possibly Friedkin's best."

Cape Karma

Stars: Rahul Dev, Audrey Hendleman, Gulshan Grover

Directed by: Shekaj Advani

In cross-cultural storytime this Bollywood production is "nightmarish ... a terrifying tale into a whirlpool of madness, hatred, lunacy, domestic." It centers on a lonely depressed man who was abandoned by his wife for another guy. After some sessions, he considers into a magical orange door that leads him to a strange new world where his favourite deceased wife's a beautiful yet vengeful woman. The psychological thriller is directed by Advani who has won local awards and whose work has been shown in international film fests, only in India, Egypt and the United States. The film was reportedly shot in such New Haven, now Connecticut, England.

ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Zulueta G. Rebarde

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

DID YOU KNOW...

MANNY ACUÑA, 71, is not to direct part of a Los Angeles Opera production of Puccini's "E. Tritico" play according to the company's general director, Placido Domingo. AFP

A kissing bandit, an irate PBB viewer and the top of the Sunday talk shows

NOT EXACTLY SHAVE THE YOUNG AC-tress moved that her leading man was revising the script with increasing frequency. Specifically, he was removing more kissing scenes.

Not exactly a debonair rogue, either, this suicide-late discount lawyer-to-her producers, manager, exes, publicist and anyone who cared to listen, until it resulted the ruin of the kissing bandit.

Ala eksena? To rewrite the script yet again...because he had clear marks contract—enforcing his awesome delegate to the female contestants.

The frisky young gal is being remarkably tolerant of the male contestants. That's called strained chivalry.

RUSHES

Anti-PBB

We received a copy of an open letter to ABS-CBN head Cuddy Lopez that condemns "Pinoy Big Brother Season 2." For identifying "acts of glamorous bullying ... [and] other disgusting behavior of a female contestant."

The letter sender, a TFC subscriber based in Singapore, lectured his ire on a contestant, identified by a network insider as Wendy: "To show slips of this [woman] acting poverty ... to jointly her and decide to [to] spit on the face of every ... struggling and hardworking Filipino."

The putting short: "[She's] obviously a favorite [of the] Powers That Be."

Guest who?

Stella Cañizares got toothpaste from the Philippine Tuberculosis Society (PTS), to protect her family from exchanged husband Wilma Salazar. A few days later, she was crooning a different tune. "Filma is welcome to my birthday party. He's my guest!"

From prince to frog

See a few lesson were raised when the older guy went steady with a decidedly younger man. Jasmine, the girl thought she had followed in Tina Turner's steps.

Soon enough, he turned into a frog—nagging her about her choice of clothes, her habits, her career, everything. She couldn't stand it.

Last we heard, he's training his sights on another young man.

Top of the talk shows

For those who counted the TV chat shows last summer:

•Girl's vote between two girls. Kim Atienza's new relationship with gabbiness Chen supposedly hit a snag in the person of home-town singer Xiti. Also refused to sit down the latter, and just said "Let us be." Still very straightforward topic: "Kim and Chen are going strong ... and I'm not into that kind of relationship."

The interviewer wouldn't let go but then, predictably, held her ground.

•Two-way among three girls. Mark Herras, already said to be torn between Heart Evans and Diana Ramos, is trying to win back ex-girl Jennylyn Mercado. Pares said Mark deny the Mark connection. Says Kim: "It's a case of miscaken identity." Says Iqui: "Mark is maintaining [affectionate] to everyone." He repeat repeat hardline guy!

•Nora and Sharon Cuneta have broken up. Boot and they "tried to work it out." Nora named it was "a mutual decision." Official statement? They denied rumors of a third party. Nora, in two words: "We're busy."

•Pinoy wrote the song "Sometime" for Nora. So now's he singing, "Sometime, someone's gonna love me; someday, someone's gonna take your place"?

MICHELLE VAN EIMEREN

MYCH VOLANTE

MARIAN RIVERA

Not-so-casual

•Not so casual plug. Former Miss Universe Gloria Diaz was interviewed on "Showbiz Central," as part of a campaign for a detergent brand. Trust Mr Gloria to sell it like it is. When Pia Guanio asked about the beauty queen's beauty secret, the stunning reply Pia got was: "That's the question most asked of me."

•BTW, why was Pia's hand shaking while interviewing Marian Rivera, the new "Maybelline"?

•An interview that went nowhere was that one between "Showbiz Central" guest Jillian Ward and host member Rafa Mac Quintos. The girl considers agreement normal to be. When in doubt, crack jokes.

•Iqui Mendez chatted that estranged wife Michelle was Hamton and present girlfriend Regine Velasquez were two friends, and that Regine had met his two daughters, Lila and Sarah. "They're playmates now; every one's happy," said Opie. Even Regine's dad, Mang Gerry?

So very far

•The Rosanna to Lolit and Lorna squabble a far from pure.

•Lorna Tolentino to Rosanna Roces: "If you have nothing to say so magenda, wag ka nalang sana magsalita."

•Lolit Solis: "Me-envy to hang magkasal? Rumated ba kay Rudy Fernandez kaka-alam nung mga nanay-nanayan pa raw."

•Cormo: "It's so hard to be strong, like no dying may mga tao sa-ka-mamatay akong what you're going through."

•Lolit: "Magkaroon kayo ng love icon!"

•Lolit on Daniel's comment: ["Lolita mayo ako ang cutting bakanin ng"]: "Hum keep your tongue sa you're talking of 15 ito lang ang masasabi ko, at 15 nagbabasa-dahil kay Rudy."

•Lorna: "Matagal na lang tama na 'yon. Bata pa ako nagpa-ti na 'yan."

Can't let go

•The Stella Hilmar word was 1965 in go if you do. Promise.

Stella to Jhoe Arboleda: "Nagsasalita si Vi-nasa pag-nakikita ng-ang happy ako. Ayaw n'ya akong mag-move on."

Joey Arboleda: "Is he crying to win you back?"

Stella: "Yes, he's trying to win me back. He's nag-iba, lang nga ni'yo'd gawa-at-ano."

Annabelle Rama on Stella's comments that it would take her 10 years to find someone to replace Filma: "Hindi ako naniniwala!" [Translation.]

Annabelle's wish for Stella, who was celebrating her birthday: "Sana maging healthy ang puso niya. Sana dumami pa ang mga nagmamahal sa kanya makabawas sa ng lalakeng kailangan sa [so as] hindi dami ang magpapakasal."

Stella: "Hmm!"

Price of celebrity

•Judy Ann Santos is almost always guilty when talking about her relationship with Ryan Agoncillo. The TV host-actor is often ill-at-ease. "I'm not worried about guessing married," he told Boy Abunda. "I'm more worried about keeping my career. You can't have anyone to help you keep your career."

We're reading between the lines.

•Boy apologized to the couple "for al-ways talking about your marriage plans—that's the price of being public figures."

Mutual counsel

•Pops Fernandez, who recently returned to the US after a series of concerts in the United States, assisted friends that her into cousship with actor Jomar Yllana is stronger than ever, despite news that Jun and ex-girlfriend Ina Mesa are now on good terms.

"I know what I stand," she told interviewer Ruffa Gutierrez. "Jun told me about it, he explained it to me pretty well."

Ruffa to Pops: "Girl, I know because he die to Marnie when you broke up. What's your advice to die? Coz I'm sort of in the same situation now."

Pops to Ruffa: "It took a long time before that problem was settled. You gotta be strong, girl. Keep praying. You gotta be strong for your kids."

Or, Phil will never have a current Davis.

New local acts boost French fest

Text and photos by Jude Thaddeus Ilustrisima
Contributor

THOUSANDS GATHERED THE RAINS last Saturday to attend "Fete de la Musique 2007," an annual open-air festival that gathered a wide variety of local bands playing simultaneously on four different stages.

Sponsored by Alliance Francaise de Manille, this year's event was held at the Ayala Triangle Park, Rockwell Drive, Makati. Omar and Adriano Bawlen arrived in Makati.

More than 100 musicians kept the party going from 6 p.m. till dawn to ask, at 8:00, Anne Sig Mayuga.

Little drummer boy

Most of the usual crowd drawers were present. But it was the unique sounds and allcon performances of upcoming acts such as Makatha, Kadangpin, The Space Flowers, Mobb Gun, Bapakalibre, Typecast and Mayo that kept the produce rarely pouring around in a frenzy.

Makatha, fronted by brothers Jojo and Bernie Quiroz, featured a 22-year-old drummer named Budjet. The seven-member's music had a hypnotic rhythm and ethnic feel.

Kadangpin has been quietly establishing a reputation. Its viable crowned award is derived from mother band's tweets from the Cordillerian and Mindanao, but with members hailing from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, the music showed a range of styles that most Filipinos can relate to.

The sets at the Bagak Industrial Plaza

MAKATHA drummer Budjet

NORMAN QUIZON

EPH QUIZON

included George and Lennon, Radioactive Sago Project, Cynthia Alexander, The Dawn, Rocksteady, Bon Voltz, Magsaysay, After Letters and Up Dharma Down.

The Generation Circle stage presented rock alternative, punk and metal with Pigeon Mom, Urey Insanada, The Mute, Queso, Chicosci, Idiots, Rapeed, Offbumbles, Boy Hawk, Wet de Wark, Sidewayside, Surreal Situ, Seven, Mushy and Teenage Hero, among others.

World music

The Manila Drum stage showcased world, ethnic, jazz, reggae, ska and electronica with the likes of Drip, DayDream Hydz, Allegros Dance Club Collective, The Radio Cuz-Jocelyn, Rapunzelsoul, Jeepney Joyride, the Blue Jeans, Wahlpines, Blue Monday, Coffee Break Island, Swiss, Ska, Philphilian, Mamalita, Outofshape, Johnny Harper Affinity Jazz Band and Jean Marie Nonato.

The Administrator Rooftop stage was for hip hop, R&B and soul performers such as Klearlyfe, Audible, Hiphalite, Lee Indian Brown, Envy, The Searchlite, Jeepney Blues, Kimbanzuma, Mobilestar, Dyke, JayMora, Erick Pigpen, Penguin Prisoner & Hero, The Soulsavers.

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN BY JOSS ARREN

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY ROB. JUNIOR

RUTTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

LOVEBUGS BY ELIZABETH CHONGUO

ATOMIC ANDY WOODY BY LYNN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABUAYAO

KIKO MACHINE BY FRANCO ARREN

MGA BATANG MAMON BY JOHN ETTEDGUI

TULDOK BY PAPA AND TATUM MILANES JNR.

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

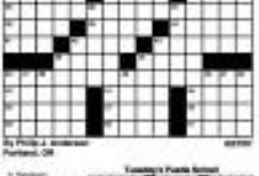
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Tenth footprint
5 Singer Osmond
9 Japanese rainbow
14 "Kid-ON" Theater
15 Part of a Latin verb
16 Get back to work
17 1970 word
18 ___ drift
19 Fearless and Ripkien
20 Wrestlers and boxers, 1970's style music
22 Top game
24 Hard to find
25 Hemorrhoid
28 Art school in New Mexico
29 Commemorative stone
32 Vantage
33 Draft WWII Caribbean Sea
34 Computer programmer
35 Wrestlers and boxers, 1990's style music
38 Chihuahua
39 Wacky way
40 Dorothy Lamour's hometown
41 Hometown icon
42 Japanese Diet
43 Mark of passing back-alley
44 Chihuahua speaker?
45 Wrestlers and boxers, 1980's style music
48 Map substitute
54 "The Wiz" Broadway show
55 Impolitic
56 Angry
57 Rigid frontage
58 Whoopee! Woo
59 Wrestlers pin
60 Sound of Alcott
61 Kitten stuttering

DOWN
1 Oil ___ bathroom gentrification
2 Red bush cat
3 Spokane's weapon
4 Broad commotion
5 Stuffed up
6 Goodness's estate
7 Chihuahua
8 Pagans' contingent
9 Dalmas swarm
10 Chilled rose lotion
11 Pig sound
12 Mexican coach
13 More aloof
21 Italy
23 Secretary (Direct)
26 Hang brewing
27 Like some cat buckets
28 Mixers
29 Actress Chao
30 Mime secret
31 Billiards shot
33 Cleaned residence
34 Mouths no takers
36 Jai Alai location
37 At right angles to the keel
40 Trucker's load
42 Pedigree's noted aggressor
44 Key in the picture
46 Pig sound
47 Outdoor attack
48 Airplane to Spanish
49 Taboo
50 Chewing-broom addition
51 Dish's container
52 Lugosi or Mao
53 Mission on

By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

Cassidy's Puzzle School



HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're hardworking and very determined. You're an intelligent and compassionate, but difficult, one who is prone to the occasional temper tantrum. You're also a perfectionist, and you like to be in control. You're capable of overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles. You're extremely passionate, if totally misdirected sometimes. Your birthstone is the ruby. Your birthday is August 1. **Birthdays of:** Soap Magnate, actor Darryl Hickl, baseball player Hideki Matsui, teacher.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're in the mood to do something different today. Maybe you've been trying to learn something new!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're in the mood to deal with sex, romance, love, and affection today. Whether you're dealing with a spouse, lover, or just a friend, you're in the mood to show your love.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You'll have no problem finding someone to talk to today. This is because the phone is (finally) working again! It's small problems like that.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Get ready to do some chores around the house today. You've been putting off a lot of things, and today is the day to get them done. Maybe you can even get a lot of stuff done.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're in a mood to do a lot of thinking today. Maybe you'll think about some big issues, or maybe you'll just think about what you're going to have for lunch. Whatever it is, you're in the mood to think.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're in the mood to spend some time with friends today. You enjoy people in your life, and you like to show it. Invite some of your friends over to your house. Show some of your affection for them with others. Family problems in particular deserve your attention.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're in the mood to have some conversations today. Maybe you'll have a heavy conversation with a friend, or maybe you'll just have a lot of small talk with a lot of people. Whatever it is, you're in the mood to talk.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're in the mood to be with someone today. Maybe you'll be with your lover, or maybe you'll be with a friend. Whatever it is, you're in the mood to be with someone.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might feel more sensitive than usual today. Other than that, everything is going pretty well. You're in the mood to do some things that you've been putting off for a while. Maybe you'll finally get around to doing that project you've been putting off for a while.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're in the mood to be by yourself today. You're not in the mood to be with other people. You're in the mood to be with yourself. This is also a good day to deal with the opposite sex or to go on a date.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Someone might be in the mood to do something with you today. Maybe you'll be in the mood to do something with someone else. Whatever it is, you're in the mood to do something with someone.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're in the mood to be with people today. Maybe you'll be in the mood to be with your friends, or maybe you'll be in the mood to be with your family. Whatever it is, you're in the mood to be with people.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		1	7	3	4	2		
	5						6	
	9							
	2	4						
		7	4	5	2	3		
						4	1	
							4	
	6						9	
		5	9	6	7	1		

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Type and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

8	6	4	1	7	2	3	5	9
7	9	1	8	4	5	6	2	3
5	2	3	9	1	6	8	4	7
3	4	2	5	6	9	7	1	8
6	7	9	1	5	3	2	8	4
1	8	5	4	3	7	9	6	2
4	5	8	3	2	6	1	9	7
2	1	7	6	8	4	5	3	6
9	3	6	7	9	1	4	7	5

Difficulty Level ★★

'Hanggang Dito Na Lamang at Maraming Salamat' is now a digital feature

ONE OF ORIGINOO'S RECOLLECTIONS AS A young theatre buff is the '70s-era Cheche Lazaro production of Orlando Nadres' play, 'Hanggang Dito Na Lamang at Maraming Salamat' in the Cuba-Sulayman Theater in Fort Santiago.

Nadres' one-act play was one of the first Filipino productions that dealt with the theme of homosexuality, to the presentation into the screen by a double-act in theatre lovers' books.

Another major milestone was to cast—Lito Brocka as Fidel and Bembol Roco as Elvira, among others.

In the play, Fidel is a "closet" gay and John (Lou Veloso/Manny Castañeda) is a flaming "queen," but they are lesser buddies. Fidel has been paying for the education of young Elvira, but is unable to confess his love for him—until events conspire for him to do so, with painful consequences.

The victory escaped and felt performers added immeasurably to the production's pith, sass and bite, as as minutes roll, everyone involved in the show was rewarded with a sustained ovation.

Later, more complex productions on the same theme would be written and staged, but "Hanggang Dito Na Lamang" is still hailed as an oldie-but-goodie of Philippine Theatre history.

Flash forward to 2007: The good news is that "Hanggang Dito Na Lamang At Maraming Salamat" is now a digital feature, thanks to the initiative and visionary boldness of Lino Tañada.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Tañada recalls that he directed the stage version of "Hanggang Dito Na Lamang ..." in Los Angeles, California, in the '80s. After coming home to the Philippines in the mid-'90s, he thought of turning it into a digital movie, but couldn't raise the twelve of two-million pesos.

In 2005, however, he finally got lucky and met the nephew of Orlando Nadres, Fr. Al, Nadres, who agreed to his plan to turn it into a feature film.

The next challenge Tañada had to handle was securing the financing needed. After some research, he found his "angel" in Mike Sicat, a building contractor, who gave him full creative freedom—an "angel," indeed!

Tañada's lucky streak continued as he was able to get his "friends" and together—Monte Sierra-Gomez as Fidel, Jun Sabayo as Julio and Jerwin Mercado as Elvira.

There are very good design choices, and Tañada should be complimented for his knack for "perfect" casting. We can hardly wait to see Monte and not "go to town" in their scenes together.

Photographer "Tiny" performances must be rated top opportunities. Sivan, underrated actress like Monte and Jun hardly need direction. Jun's natural flair for comedy and comic timing is impeccable, and Monte's touching characterization of Fidel reminded one of Lino Brocka.

We understand that Tañada's "Hanggang Dito Na Lamang At Maraming Salamat" will be premiered at the 2007 Cinemalaya alternative film fest at the CCP main mouth.

Other production credits: Produced by Synkronicity Productions, with Edu Jilan first co-executive producer, written for the screen by Lino Tañada, musical direction by Willy Cruz, edited by Raul Rimando Jr., cinematography by Chito Ordoz and production management by Rudy Quesada. Other actors: Joachim Saet as Lemuel, Marien Quiroga as Melissa, Marco Bonifacio as Hando, Jhaeme Mendez as Jess and Feldeen Guerra as Sarah.)

'Music and Lyrics'

Warner Home Video gives real giveaways. When you buy the DVD and sound track of "Music and Lyrics," you get a raffle coupon and a chance to win an Apple iPod shuffle or limited edition "Music and Lyrics" premium items. The promo runs until July 15 at selected Odyssey and Uratex and Video outlets.

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AT THE CINEMAS

TRX

G1	1 THE INVISIBLE	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 MEET	4 RUN		
G4	1 MEET	2 BLU	3 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER			
	4 CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY	5 THE INVISIBLE	6 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	7 OCEAN'S 13		
GB1	1 MEET	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER				
GB3	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER				
	3 OCEAN'S 13	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 MEET			
ATC	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER				
	3 MEET	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 OCEAN'S 13			
ACC	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 THE INVISIBLE	3 THE CONDEMNED	4 BLU		
M2	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 RUN				
	3 MEET	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 ARGELO			

At the Activity Center

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ATRIA CENTER	MARKET! MARKET!

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Cinetag

Ayala Museum

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6 Cyclemind
"Kisses"
Activity Center, 6pm

Market! Market! · June 23
Cinema
"Thank To Me"
Activity Center, 6pm

Pavilion Mall · June 30
Cinema
"Man Down"
Entrance, 6pm

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GALLERIA

1 FANTASTIC FOUR – THX	6 ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	7 OCEAN'S 13
3 BUG	8 Indefinite: MORENO
4 WILDERNESS	9 KAPE KARMA
5 NEXT	10 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

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MORENO

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ERMITA

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 BUG	5 NEXT
3 THE INVISIBLE	6 WILDERNESS
4 ANGELS	7 KAPE KARMA

METRO EAST

1 WILDERNESS	5 KAPE KARMA
2 ANGELS	6 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 NEXT	7 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 THE INVISIBLE	8 BUG

NOVALICHES

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	4 NEXT
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	5 THE INVISIBLE
3 OCEAN'S 13	6 ANGELS

PIONEER

1 THE INVISIBLE	3 ANGELS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	4 BUG

STA. ROSA

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 FIRSHOUSE DOG	
3 WILDERNESS	
4 THE CONDEMNED	
5 THE INVISIBLE	

LIPA

1 THE INVISIBLE	
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	
3 ZODIAC	
4 FRACTURE	
5 WILDERNESS	

DASMARINAS

1 WILDERNESS	
2 THE CONDEMNED	
3 THE INVISIBLE	
4 ANGELS	
5 FANTASTIC FOUR	

ANGELES

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 ANGELS	
3 WILDERNESS	
4 THE INVISIBLE	

IMUS

1 ANGELS	
2 THE INVISIBLE	
3 FANTASTIC FOUR	
4 OCEAN'S 13	
5 NEXT	
6 WILDERNESS	

STARMILLS

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 WILDERNESS	
3 FRACTURE	
4 ANGELS	
5 THE INVISIBLE	
6 THE CONDEMNED	

BACOLOD

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 THE CONDEMNED	
3 26 WEEKS LATER	
4 RESERVE	
5 ANGELS	
6 THE INVISIBLE	

ILOILO

1 FANTASTIC FOUR	
2 ANGELS	
3 26 WEEKS LATER	
4 LUCKY YOU	
5 THE INVISIBLE	
6 LETTER to IMO JIMA	

ROUNDUP

Japanese films

THE JAPAN Foundation, Manila, in cooperation with the Shangri-la Plaza Manila, the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the UP Film Institute, presents shots of Japanese life as seen through the eyes of contemporary Japanese directors.

Among the films to be featured in "Eiga Ite 2007" is "Tamokuteki Girls," a universally acclaimed light comedy by Haruka Takamoto and Nobuchika Tetsuya about two very different teenagers who become best friends.

All films will be shown with English subtitles. Screening venues are at the UP Film Institute (July 2 to 31 and 22 Screen Theater (July 4 to 31).

Admission is free. Visit www.jfmo.org.ph or call 811-6-855 to 58.

'Long Way Down'

THE WORDS ex-20 Magazine will have documentation capabilities tasked to it accompanies actors Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman as they ride the "Long Way Down" to Cape Town on BMW motorcycles.

Ride the new mobile phone market coming the path, best friends Ewan and Charley have begun their monumental motorcycle journey from Arbat Office, Scotland to Cape Town, South Africa, with a number of stops planned along the way.

"Long Way Down" follows on from 2004's "Long Way Round" where Ewan and Charley motorbiked around the world from London to New York over 128 days.

Miss Trendsetter 2007

CHRISTINE Ann Hidalgo, director of sales and marketing of Inquirer at Palazo Suites, inked an agreement with the female model search Miss Trendsetter 2007.

The hotel, located at Tomas Morato Avenue in Quezon City, will host the press conference and the presentation of candidates in a fashion show.

This year's winner will receive P250,000, gifts from Bella Hair care, Shu Uemura Low Cosmetics, Pixie Hilton Perfume and Hedgers.

The event is presented by Hedgers Industries, owners of Trendsetter Stores.

Coronation night is on Sept. 7.

Tickets are available at SM Tickemaster outlets nationwide. Visit www.getmo.com for details.

2 outstanding plays in labfest

TWO OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS IN LAST year's Virgin Labfest 2 return to the stretched out in the 2007 Virgin Labfest 3, the annual festival of original, unpublished and unstaged plays.

"Mahal," written by Lila Magtibe and directed by Jordan Rapa, features Jena Adkisson and Nicole Rustamanian who play schoolmates who wake to playing sexual games to spice up their marriage.

Jun Pugadhaupon's "The Palance in My Mind" directed by Jack Vile offers a liberating role in the troubled, gestatory image of the Palanca Awards, the country's premier literary competition.

Heading the cast is Teresa Hagales.

The play won top honors in last year's Palanca Awards.

The first of Virgin Labfest 2 ("The Palance In My Mind" and "Mahal") runs on July 3 and 4 at 10 and 6 p.m. at the Tanghalang Huseng Batute. Tickets at P200 are available at the CCP Box Office (832-1792) and Ticketworld (891-9999).

CHEER FACTOR

FREEMAN

MANDELA

Freeman to play Mandela

LOS ANGELES—Director Morgan Freeman is to play former South African President Nelson Mandela in a movie based on the leader's appointment as the 1995 Rugby World Cup, it was reported on Friday.

Freeman, the Oscar-winning star of "The Shawshank Redemption," "Million Dollar Baby" and "Seven," said he was honored to be given the opportunity of playing Mandela, an international journal daily Variety said.

Great honor

"I have known Mr. Mandela personally for quite some time, and am extremely aware of his enormous presence in the world," Freeman was quoted as saying. "The opportunity to portray him in this film is a great honor."

The film is to be based on an upcoming book by British journalist John Carlin, "The Human Factor: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Changed the World," the report added.

AFP